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THE FOUR PROPHETIC EMPIRES,

AND THE

KINGDOM OF MESSIAH:

BEING AN EXPOSITION [illegible]

THE FIRST TWO VISIONS O[illegible]NIEL.

LANE LIBRARY SEMINARY.

BY THE REV. T. R. BIRKS, M.A.

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
Measured this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stand fixed! beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.

PAR. LOST. XII. 553.

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PREFACE.

A VERY few remarks are all that appear needful, in order to explain the occasion and object of the present work. In the 'First Elements of Sacred Prophecy,' the author had endeavoured to remove some of those prejudices and objections, which have lately been repeated in various forms, and have tended to obscure even the simplest conclusions that had been previously drawn from the inspired predictions. The first maxims of the most received interpretations among Protestant Churches were there examined; the chief objections of recent authors analyzed; their weakness, as I think, conclusively shewn, and the access cleared afresh to this temple of Divine truth.

But the removal of doubts and difficulties, however needful, is comparatively an irksome task, and has only indirect bearing on the spiritual profit of the Church. The prophetic commentaries of elder writers, it was also clear, were in several respects ill-suited to the wants of the present day. They were written before many of the recent objections had arisen, or, at least, when they were presented in a different form. Some of them were too concise; others mixed with doubtful or clearly

6

erroneous theories ; others are encumbered with a profusion of learning, that rather distracts the attention than informs the judgment, or quickens the heart. And especially, few of them develop those moral and spiritual lessons which are the most valuable fruit of the whole subject, and the most profitable for the Church of God. It seemed desirable that works should be provided, suitable for the wants of our own age, and distinguished, as far as possible, by these three characters :—strict accuracy and clearness in the logical basis on which they rest ; a more full and impressive development of history by the light of the inspired predictions ; and a more free and discursive range of spiritual and practical application.

Such were the motives which led to the present work. The Four Empires of Daniel naturally suggested themselves, as a subject more simple and fundamental than any other branch of the word of prophecy. And, besides the natural order, which pointed them out as most suitable for an attempt of this kind, another motive led to the same choice. When the 'Elements' were written, three works on the Apocalypse, by the ablest living commentators, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Faber, and Mr. Elliott, were just ready to appear. Both discretion and modesty forbade me therefore to enter prematurely on this more difficult field, when such valuable materials for a sound judgment were actually being supplied to the Church of Christ.

The subject once chosen, three objects have been principally kept in view in the composition of the work. First, in the skeleton of the interpretation, to give the results of a mature and careful judgment, after a review of the best previous authors ; with a tacit reference to the most plausible objections, and a concise

outline of the evidence by which the interpretation here adopted has its truth clearly established. Secondly, to develop the history with sufficient fulness of detail to produce the effect of leavening the mind with the deep sense of God's prescient wisdom, and the intense reality of His overruling providence. And lastly, to unfold some of those practical and spiritual lessons which lie scattered, in such a rich profusion, over this wide and interesting field of Divine truth.

The interpretations offered in the former part of the work are, in general, the property of the whole church for ages; and their development, where it contains any thing peculiar, has been matured from various sources in the author's own mind. Hence it was impossible to state any specific obligations to former writers. The works of Mede and Sir Isaac Newton, among older commentators, and those of Mr. Faber, Mr. Frere, and Mr. Cuninghame, among living authors, next to the original authorities, have supplied me with the chief materials; and I gladly make the three last-named writers this general acknowledgment, which seems their due. For the views unfolded in the later chapters I feel a less divided responsibility. They would not have been offered to the Church, had they not appeared to me essential to a clear understanding of the prophecy, and been the result of convictions both slowly and carefully matured. In a spirit far removed, I trust, from a rash dogmatism in the deep things of God, yet with a full persuasion of their truth and preciousness, they are now submitted to the prayerful meditation of the Christian reader.

From the diversified nature of the objects the volume had in view, it has become chargeable, I fear, with an

apparent want of uniformity. Some chapters may seem too dry, and others too discursive. But I trust that on closer attention there will be seen, throughout, a practical unity of design. My aim has been, first of all, to impress the mind of the reader with a vivid sense of the reality of Divine Providence, based firmly on a strict and logical interpretation of the visions, and then to clothe the bare outline with a refreshing variety of spiritual meditations. It was my hope that the subject might thus become eminently profitable to the Church, to deepen and confirm her faith, to enlarge her hopes, to animate her love, and awaken a more lively adoration of the works and ways of the Most High. In the earnest hope that it may not altogether fail of its designed purpose, it is now humbly committed to Him, with the prayer that His blessing may rest upon its publication.

Watton Rectory, Herts, May 6, 1844.

*** The changes in this Second Edition are very few and slight. There are several topics which might have been introduced; but as I hope to have another opportunity for unfolding them, I have thought it more desirable to leave the present work unaltered. I would only express my thankfulness to God for the measure of acceptance it has found; and my sorrow for the country, that some of its warnings should have been so quickly verified. May God, in His great mercy, still avert from us this national crime.

Kelshall Rectory, Herts, May 8, 1845.

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ON THE FOUR PROPHETIC EMPIRES AND THE KINGDOM OF MESSIAH.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

From the first promise in Eden, down to the last message of inspiration in the Isle of Patmos, the word of prophecy has been commended to the Church for her devout and prayerful meditation. It has been a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day-star arise in the heart. The truths, indeed, which need first of all to be learned in the school of Christ, are those which relate to the acceptance and pardon of the fallen sinner, and the holy obedience to which he is invited in the Gospel. They are summed up in the earnest inquiry of the Philippian jailor, "What must I do to be saved!" and in the words of St. Paul at his conversion, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" But when the soul is once established in the faith, and has entered on a course of willing obedience to God's commandments, there is an instinct which calls it still higher, and to a still larger view of the Divine counsels. The Christian then rises out of the circle of his own

wants, and the narrow range of his own little sphere, to seek for insight into the ways of the Most High, and the counsels of his love which are from everlasting to everlasting. And hence the beloved Apostle, who was privileged, above the rest, with prophetic revelations, presents this as the third and highest stage of Christian attainment, to " know Him who was from the beginning." To understand those thoughts and plans of Divine love, which for six thousand years have been fulfilling upon this lower world, is thus the last and highest step in the ladder of Christian experience, and that by which the believer is prepared to enter on the full light of the coming glory.

The fall of man produced a twofold effect, which conspired to hide from sinners the counsels of God. By letting in the tide of evil into God's creation, it rendered the course of His Providence far more deep and mysterious ; and, at the same time, it obscured, and almost destroyed, the faculty of spiritual vision. Man was not only an exile, but in darkness. It was the purpose of God, in the redemption of Christ, to restore His people into full communion with His own goodness, and a clear knowledge of His own thoughts and purposes of love. But the recovery was to be gradual and slow. Ages had to pass, before the great Deliverer should appear. And till then, it was the part of wisdom to give the Church but a partial insight into those long years of deferred hope and abounding evil, through which the grace of God was slowly and steadily advancing to its final triumph.

Hence, in the earlier ages of the world, the light of prophecy was very sparingly dispensed to the Church of God. As soon as sin had entered, and Satan had triumphed, the promise of a mighty Redeemer was given. But the steps and stages of that redemption were veiled under a thick cloud. Till the time of Abraham, little seems to have been revealed, beyond the general promise of salvation, and the warning of judgment to come.

With the call of Abraham a fresh era of Providence began. The general promise was now enlarged and unfolded by many distinct prophecies. The ancestry of Messiah, the blessings on the race of Abraham, the land of promise, which was to be the peculiar theatre of Divine mercies, were all defined. A spot was cleared out from the waste of the fallen world, where the Divine purpose of redemption was to unfold itself with growing clearness and beauty. But still, though the prophecies under the patriarchs and the earlier times of the law were more numerous and full, they were given, "in many parts," or fragments. No continuous and connected scheme of Providence was revealed, however dimly, to the Church. Even the two advents of Messiah were as yet distinguished from each other by types only; and the long rejection of Israel and call of the Gentiles was an unopened mystery.

When the typical kingdom of Israel began to wane, and the glory of Solomon had passed away, the light of inspired prophecy was vouchsafed to the Church in larger measure. A series of holy prophets, from Elijah to Jeremiah and Ezekiel, gave fuller and fuller declarations of the present judgments and future counsels of God. The two advents of Messiah were distinctly revealed in many predictions. The sins of Israel, and their rejection, were plainly foretold. The calling of Gentile believers in their room was more dimly announced by several scattered intimations; while the final recovery of Israel, and the glory of Zion, were the continual themes of prophetic exultation and joy. Mixed with these were warnings of severe judgment, promises of the resurrection, and glimpses of an eternal kingdom of glory. But the exact nature and order of these events, the periods they were to occupy, or the manner in which they were to blend together in their fulfilment, was still left under a mysterious veil. The word of prophecy seemed, like Noah's dove, to light here and there upon the mountain tops of history; to touch on every judgment and deliverance, and to range over

wide tracts of future hope ; but no chart was given by which to arrange the whole landscape, and survey in their connected beauty and grandeur the course of the Divine counsels.

At length, when the tabernacle of David was removed, and Israel led away captive, Ephraim to Assyria, and Judah to Babylon, the full time was come for a more distinct view to be given to the Church, now passing through affliction, of her future trials and final deliverance. One of the royal exiles of Judah was chosen as the beloved messenger, by whom the precious gift was to be conveyed ; and the court of the king of Babylon, was the scene where the Spirit of God first revealed, in distinct order, the course of the world's history till the full advent of Messiah's eternal kingdom.

The prophecies of Daniel form, therefore, a most important era in the course of Divine revelation. In these visions, by the confession of infidels themselves, 'the four empires' which history has since disclosed to us, 'are clearly described ;' and thus a comprehensive outline of Providence is given to the Church, which is filled up by the other visions of the same prophet, and those of St. John ; which attracts around it, like a sacred magnet, all the scattered and discursive prophecies, which had for ages been revealed to the people of God.

But the same holy Apostle who commands us to take heed to the word of prophecy, explains to us also the only means by which it can render us effectual guidance, even with all the fuller light which Daniel and the later prophets have revealed. That means is the diligent comparison, one with another, of the inspired predictions. 'No prophecy of Scripture is of self-interpretation.' They are not separate fragments, made up of human conjectures ; but parts of one connected plan, various emanations from one fountain of perfect wisdom. "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The words of St. Peter show clearly the sin and danger of a contented ignorance of the Divine prophecies.

For then they must cease to fulfil their designed office ; they are a beacon no longer. The very light which has been given to direct our hopes is obscure in darkness. Our indolence or pride will have made void one of God's most precious gifts to His Church ; and will expose us, like the Jews of old, to the danger of stumbling in darkness, or of fighting against the revealed purposes of the Most High.

But these words also teach us the need of a connected and patient study, that we may attain a true knowledge of these prophetic revelations. Those parts of Divine truth which are needful even for beginners in the faith, are revealed separately, time after time, with the utmost clearness. But the Apostle reminds us that with these higher and further truths the Holy Spirit has pursued a different course. He has not designed that they should drop into the mouth of the careless. They are to be the reward of diligent, prayerful research, the fruit of a patient comparison of all that God has revealed. The appeal to first impressions must here be unwise, and may serve only to mislead and deceive. Exact reasoning, careful inquiry, diligent examination, are all needed, if we would avoid the errors of a private interpretation, and rise into the clear and harmonious view of these sacred prophecies. For they are all linked together in a sacred unity of plan, and each part will only be understood, fully and clearly, when seen in connection with the whole scheme of redemption. We must ascend slowly the hill side of truth, before we can attain the full view of this wide landscape,—the landscape of God's providence in this lower world.

Now in searching, as we are commanded, the word of prophecy, the four empires of Daniel must form the natural basis of the inquiry. They are a sacred calendar, which reaches through all the course of time into the years of eternity. Every other prediction may be referred to its own place in the series, when these grand outlines of history have been fixed and ascertained. There are indeed several great doctrines, as the conver-

sion and restoration of Israel, which may be separately proved by abundant evidence. But it is only by adopting this divine chart for our guide, that we can see the order, connexion, and continuous outlines, of the past history and future hopes of the Church. The general consent of expositors for many ages, the difficulties and objections which have been raised of late by a few writers, and the fundamental nature of the subject, which lies at the basis of all prophetic truth, are so many reasons for patient, exact, and full research. And when once the historical meaning of these empires has been fully established and explained, it will shed a strong and steady light on the more difficult prophecies, and lead us by the hand to a firm and sure conviction of their true reference ; so that our faith may rest, not on the doubtful opinions of men, but on the sure testimony of God.

There are several points in the opening history which help to illustrate the meaning of the prophetic visions. And doubtless the preface was given for this very reason, that we might learn more fully the causes for which these prophecies were given, and the chief lessons they were designed to convey.

The time itself is deeply instructive. "The king of Babylon came unto Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his God ; and he brought the vessels into the treasure-house of his god." The kingdom of David and Solomon was thus tottering to its fall, and crumbling into ruin. The temple, honoured so long by the visible tokens of God's presence, was profaned, and given to the spoiler : and all the external glory of the Church was passing away.

In this hour of gloom and sorrow, when the outward helps of faith were withdrawn, and the heritage of God was made desolate, the light of prophecy began to shine with a tenfold clearness. The church, for near a thousand years, had been training under the elements

of the world; and outward ordinances, a stately ceremonial, a visible theocracy, and a gorgeous temple, had been used as helps to her faith, and the present tokens of the power and dominion of God. Now she was called to a nobler standing, to rest simply on the word of promise, and stay on the covenant of grace. The light of prophecy was increased tenfold, while the kingdom was overthrown, and the temple laid in ruins. And thus believers were taught to see in these promises the true temple in which their souls were to worship, and to exchange the glitter of types and ceremonies, for meditation on the glorious hopes which the Lord had revealed.

Again, the first year of Nebuchadnezzar in the sacred chronology was also the date of the seventy years' captivity. Throughout the whole of that period Daniel continued to prophesy, till its very close. And thus, by a double sign, we are taught that the object of these visions is that long period of Israel's desolation, which is hereafter to end in their recovery and blessedness for ever. The time of the prophet becomes a type of the larger period through which his visions extend; and the seventy years of the first empire represent in character the whole duration of the great image, which commences at the very same time. An earnest was thus given to the church of the trials through which she was to pass, before the arrival of her full deliverance.

But further, the character of the prophet himself conveys a deep lesson. He was an exile of Judah, but of the royal seed, skilful in wisdom and knowledge; and trained also with care in all the learning of the Chaldeans. Above all, his character was marked by the love of holiness, the jealous avoidance of sin, and a self-denying reverence for the commands of God, amidst the most dangerous and ensnaring temptations.

Now, by this account of the holy prophet, the Holy Spirit reminds us of the true preparation for understanding His divine messages. We are not here to despise even human learning, but gladly to embrace every help which it affords, and consecrate language and

history to the cause of God. But still more, we are to aim at a holy and reverent spirit. We are to view the word of prophecy, not as the object of a vain curiosity, but as the source of true comfort and peace in present or future trials. It was to a captive in Babylon that the fullest light of prophecy was given under the Old Testament. It was in the exile of Patmos that St. John received a still larger supply of the heavenly treasure. It is not cold and speculative logicians, much less sarcastic triflers, but martyrs and confessors, in prison and at the flames, who are likely to be guided the farthest into the meaning of these sacred prophecies.

Before, however, Daniel and his companions were gifted with prophetic light, their names were changed, and Chaldean surnames were given to them. There seem here to be two chief lessons implied. To comprehend the width of the Divine counsels, we must rise out of the local and narrow conceptions derived from the land of our birth, and take a loftier and more heavenly station, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, but we gaze upon the whole world in the light of those moral distinctions alone which are permanent and everlasting. And further, we are taught that the church was now to be set loose from its exclusive forms and Jewish elements, and that Israel's captivity was to be the signal for mercy and grace toward the Gentile world. Never, from the time of Abraham until the dream was revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, does a true prophet of God seem to have been addressed under a Gentile name. "The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known to me the dream, and the interpretation?" The new name, imposed on the holy prophet, was the sign and earnest of a new character which was about to be impressed on the whole church of God.

The immediate occasion of the first vision is equally striking and impressive. The wisdom of man was first silenced and condemned. The astrologers, the magicians, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, none of them could tell the dream, nor even save themselves from the im-

pending destruction. The word of prophecy, revealed in answer to fervent prayer, alone could heal the trouble of the monarch, and remove the sentence of death from his counsellors. How instructive a parable is this for all ages! The dim, vague apprehensions of the future, which the worldling can attain, serve only to fill his bosom with terror and alarm. There is no distinct knowledge, no clear and waking memory of the truth. There is only the shadow of a terrible dream, haunting the soul with some fearful imagination of judgment to come. The higher attainments of worldly wisdom have only this wretched fruit, to turn the vague fears of the monarch into that certain expectation of death and judgment which befel the Chaldean sorcerers. But the prayer of faith brings with it both light and salvation. The word of prophecy, received in an humble heart, turns fear into hope, and terror and alarm into gladness and thanksgiving. It converts the sentence of death into that sweet song of gratitude, "I thank and praise thee, O God of my fathers."

But let us now proceed to those two main visions, the Great Image, and the Four Beasts, which contain the narrative of the Four Prophetic Empires. These alone will form a wide and interesting subject of research. It will be endeavoured, in each part, first to ascertain, on firm and solid evidence, its true meaning; then to unfold the historical fulfilment, with sufficient detail to impress the great fact of Divine Providence which it reveals; and finally, to derive from the interpretation some practical lessons of spiritual wisdom. Last of all, the true nature of that kingdom of Messiah which is to follow, and to last for ever, will be unfolded by the light of God's word; and it will be endeavoured thus to illustrate the harmony of the divine dispensations, and the glory and fulness of those hopes which are revealed to the Church of God. At each stage of the inquiry, the landscape will open more widely to our view; till we learn to join at length in that song of the redeemed, "Great and marvellous are thy works,

Lord God Almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name ! " May He who is the fountain of all wisdom, prosper this attempt to unfold some of the deep treasures hidden in His word !

CHAPTER II.

ON THE FOUR EMPIRES IN GENERAL.

Before entering upon the detailed history of the four empires, and the minute interpretation of the prophetic visions, it is needful, first of all, to establish the main outlines of their historical application.

The following maxims, which seem to lie at the basis of all sound expositions of prophecy, have been confirmed by direct evidence in a previous work; and the various objections raised against them have been examined and disproved.

1. That the Four Kingdoms, both in the vision of the great Image, and of the four beasts, denote the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

2. That the vision of the ram and he-goat begins with the history of Persia and Greece, from Cyrus to Alexander.

3. That there is no internal proof of the little horn of the fourth beast and of the he-goat, denoting the same power.

4. That the prophecy of the Scripture of truth begins with events now past, from Cyrus the Great to Antiochus Epiphanes.

5. That the prophecy of the seventy weeks is fulfilled in weeks of years, and that sixty-nine of these, at least, had passed before the fall of Jerusalem.

6. That the prophecy of our Lord, in its first part, relates to the age of the Apostles, and the fall of the actual temple.

7. That the prophecies, especially those of Daniel and of St. John, are continuous, and begin with some chief event near to the date when they were given.

8. That the Apocalypse begins within the life-time of St. John, and ranges through the whole Christian dispensation.

9. That the exposition of *kings* as ruling *dynasties*, in the symbolical prophecies, is confirmed alike by reason and Scripture usage.

10. That the year-day theory is no gratuitous assumption; but supported by a remarkable variety of concurrent evidence, which amounts to a moral demonstration of its truth.

These maxims, except the two last, have been confirmed by the general assent of the Church, from the earliest times down to the present day. There is also a direct scriptural reason why the last should not have been apprehended earlier, because the words containing these prophetic times were sealed unto the time of the end. Every exposition which contradicts these principles, and especially the eight maxims first named, bears on its front the clear mark of its own spuriousness. In the present work, however, the first and ninth maxims are all that are needed, and especially the first, which becomes the foundation of the whole exposition. It will be useful then, to resume the evidence of its truth, and to compare the opposite errors which deviate from it on either side.

The rival interpretation which has prevailed the most is that of which Porphyry is the earliest known advocate, and which has been embraced since by Junius, Hayn, Lightfoot, Grotius, L'Empereur, and Venema, and a few other writers down to our own day. Its main feature is to make the successors of Alexander the fourth empire, distinct from that of Alexander himself, and thus to terminate the visions before the first advent.

An opposite deviation from the general view has been adopted by a few writers in the last fifteen or twenty years. Their scheme, so far as it has any consistency,

is the following. The empire of Persia is only the continuance of the first empire of Babylon. The second is the Grecian, and the third the Roman. The fourth is still future ; and some of them fancy that the Babylon of the Apocalypse is the literal Babylon of Chaldea ; that this will revive and form the fourth empire. The four beasts, most of them imagine, are all still future, and the fourth of them only is the same as in the previous vision.

It is plain that these errors are exactly opposite, one to the other, and thus furnish an indirect confirmation of the received view. The two points also on which their truth or falsehood must depend, are the distinctness of Babylon and Persia, and the unity of the Greek empire through its whole course. Besides these, two secondary topics are involved ; the sameness of the empires in the two visions, and the literal or mysterious sense of the Apocalyptic Babylon.

I. That Babylon and Persia were two distinct empires, may be proved abundantly by the following arguments.

1. *The words of Daniel to Belshazzar.* "God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it." "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Here we learn, from inspired authority, that at the death of Belshazzar, the kingdom of Babylon was numbered, finished, divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. Words could not express more plainly that another empire was then to begin.

2. *The words of Isaiah concerning Tyre.* "It shall come to pass in that day, that Tyrus shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of *one king*." The *one king* is here plainly equivalent to one *kingdom*, that of Babylon. Its beginning is dated from Nebuchadnezzar's reign, and the captivity of Jehoiakim. And hence the one kingdom closed with the fall of Babylon under Cyrus. For there were just seventy years from the accession of Jehoiakim, the first tributary of Babylon, to the fall of Belshazzar, A. C. 608—538.

3. *The words of Jeremiah concerning the captivity;* xxv. 11—13. "And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, I will punish the *king of Babylon and that nation*, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring on that land all that I have pronounced against it. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also; and I will recompense them according to their deeds." Here again it is most clear and evident, that the retribution and fall of the Babylonian kingdom was to be at the close of the seventy years, or A.C. 538—536, at the accession of Darius the Mede and Cyrus.

4. *The words of Jeremiah concerning the kingdom itself;* xxvii. 6, 7. "And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and *his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come;* and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him." Here also it is plain that the kingdom of Babylon ceases with the family of Nebuchadnezzar, or in other words, with the death of Belshazzar. No declaration can be plainer than these words of the prophet.

5. *The words of Isaiah concerning the fall of Babylon;* xiii. 17, 19. "Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver, and as for gold they shall not delight in it. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." It is plain, here also, that the ruin of the Babylonian kingdom is dated from the triumph of the Medes and Persians.

6. *The prophecy of Jeremiah on the same subject:* l. 1; li. 37. In every part of this description the victory

of the Medes and Persians is made the time of Babylon's overthrow, when it ceases to be a ruling kingdom.

7. *The change in the laws and government.* In Daniel vi. we see clearly that, after the fall of Belshazzar, the laws in force were no longer those of Babylon, but, as it is three times repeated, and with a marked emphasis, the laws of the Medes and Persians. Here is another proof, equally strong and decisive, that a new empire had begun.

8. *The change in the seat of empire.* For though Babylon continued, naturally, the head of a province, and contained a royal palace ; wherever the Scripture after this event marks the place of the royal residence, it is not at Babylon but at Susa ; as implied in the book of Ezra, and plainly taught us in the histories of Esther and Nehemiah.

9. *The change of the ordinary title.* Before the accession of Darius, the monarchs are always called kings of Babylon. Afterwards they are styled, about thirty times, kings of Persia. The five or six exceptions are at once explained, when we remember that Babylon was still the most wealthy province, and that, as the head of gold, it represented the whole succession of the Gentile kingdoms.

10. *The typical character of Babylon's fall.* This is used often to prefigure the final overthrow of the kingdoms of the world. Now unless there were at least a change of the empire, the type would be most unsuitable. This one fact, of itself, proves that the distinction of Babylon and Persia is more conspicuous than that of Persia and Greece, or Greece and Rome.

11. *The direct interpretation of the angel* is a further and clear proof. Even before the fall of Babylon the vision of the Ram and the he goat was given, with the following explanation. "The ram having the two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." The Medo-Persian was therefore one distinct and separate kingdom, and the angel Gabriel bears direct witness of this truth.

12. Finally, the testimony of profane history is equally clear. To illustrate this, it will be enough to

transcribe the astronomical canon, the main basis of profane chronology, so far as it refers to this period. The dates are there given in the years of Nebonassar.

Nabocalassar,	21	years,	died A.N.	143,	A.C.	605.
Nabocolassar,	43	...	...	186,	...	562.
Ilverodamus,	2	...	...	188,	...	560.
Nericassolassarus,	4	...	...	192,	...	556.
Nabonadius,	17	...	...	209,	...	539.
Kings of the Persians.						
Cyrus,	9	...	..	218,	...	530.
Cambyses,	8	...	...	226,	...	522.
Darius,	36	...	...	262,	...	486.
Xerxes,	21	...	..	283,	...	465.
Artaxerxes I.,	41	...	...	324,	...	424.
Darius II.,	19	...	...	343,	...	405.
Artaxerxes II.,	46	...	...	389,	...	359.
Ochus,	21	...	...	410,	...	338.
Arostes,	2	...	...	412,	...	336.
Darius III.,	4	...	...	416.	...	332.
Kings of the Greeks.						
Alexander,	8	...	...	424,	...	324.
Philip Aridæus,	7	...	...	431,	...	317.
Alexander Ægus.	12	...	...	443,	...	305.
Greek Kings of Egypt.						
Ptolemy Lagus,	20	...	...	463,	...	285.
PtolemyPhiladelph.	38	...	...	501,	...	247.
Pt. Euergetes,	25	...	...	526	...	222.
Pt. Philopator,	17	...	...	543,	...	205.
Pt. Epiphanes,	24	...	...	567,	...	181.
Pt. Philometor,	35	...	...	602,	...	146.
Pt. Euergetes II.,	29	...	...	631,	...	117.
Pt. Soter,	36	...	...	697,	...	181.
Pt. Dionysus,	29	...	...	696,	...	52.
Cleopatra,	22	...	...	718,	...	30.
Kings of the Romans.						
Augustus,	43	...	...	761,	A. D.	14.

This important document accords, therefore, entirely with the usual exposition of the four kingdoms. The break between Persia and Babylon is here just as complete as between Persia and Greece, or Greece and Rome. The only variety is the distinction between the kings of the Greeks, and the Greek kings in Egypt. And this naturally arose from the fourfold separation of that empire, and the place where the canon itself was compiled, under the Egyptian kings.

Thus complete and overwhelming is the proof, that Babylon and Persia form, in the prophecy, two distinct empires. Three reasons only seem to have been offered for confounding them together, and these are all clearly erroneous or inconclusive. The first is the occasional use of the title, king of Babylon, to describe the Persian monarchs. But this is very rare, and may be explained by special reasons in each case, besides the general fact, that Babylon continued a main province of the empire, though its rule had passed away.

The next reason is, that the second empire is inferior to the first; but the Macedonian was a smaller empire than the Babylonian, and the Persian larger. Both premises are here untrue. The inferiority, as both the symbol and the etymology of the word prove, is not in size or extent, but in dignity and grandeur. And again, the Macedonian empire under Alexander was not smaller but larger than the Persian.

Again, the third empire alone, it is said, was to bear rule over all the earth. But this was not true of the Macedonian, and is true, in a relative sense, of the Roman. Here also both premises are untrue. Universal rule is not a distinctive mark of the third empire. It is directly ascribed to three out of four, and plainly implied of the other also. The prophet is not contrasting the second and third empires, but deducing from the symbol a character which is common to them both. The other premise is equally fallacious. For the Macedonian empire was larger than that of Babylon, which the prophet himself calls universal.

This baseless theory has sometimes received a further addition. The Babylon of the Apocalypse has been conjectured to be the literal Babylon of Chaldea, which is thus to be a future fourth empire. It is needless to adduce all the reasons which the Apocalypse yields to refute this strange fancy; that Babylon is a name of mystery, that its site is on seven mountains, and that in St. John's days it was ruling over the kings of the earth. One argument alone, from the visions of Daniel, refutes it decisively. The gold, silver, brass, and iron are broken to pieces together. But the gold is the kingdom of Babylon; and therefore the iron cannot possibly be the same. No fancy can be more baseless and more opposed to all the evidence of God's word than this supplemental theory. The conclusion from the whole examination is clear. That the three first empires are those of Babylon, Persia, and Greece, is established on the firmest grounds, as well as confirmed by an assent of the church almost unbroken in every age.

II. The Unity of the Greek Empire is the next subject to be examined; since, by an opposite error to the last, this has been denied, and the successors of Alexander, have been erected into a fourth kingdom. This opinion, though once adopted by nearly every one who deviated from the common view, has now scarcely an advocate. It will be enough to adduce only two or three plain arguments to disprove it.

1. First, the emblem of the he-goat is alone decisive. That symbol plainly includes the division of Alexander's kingdom, and the reign of his successors in the divided provinces. Yet the whole is denoted by one beast only. This proves clearly that the successors of Alexander are only the continuance of the third empire, and not a distinct power.

2. The characters of the fourth kingdom equally disprove the hypothesis. Beyond all question the successors of Alexander were less powerful than that monarch himself. But the fourth beast, on the contrary, is stronger and more terrible than the third; the iron is stronger than the brass which precedes it.

3. A third proof is found in the events which mark the close of the fourth empire. It is said that in the days of those kings, "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom," &c. But even admitting, for the sake of argument, that the reference might be to the First Advent, the last of Alexander's successors was extinct before the birth of our Lord. The concession, however, may be safely withheld; for what can be clearer than that the description in Dan. vii. 13, 14, does not relate to the First Advent? Tried by every test, the hypothesis is found wanting.

III. THE SAMENESS OF THE EMPIRES IN THE TWO VISIONS is the chief point which still remains to be proved. This had been received, without a question, from the earliest age of the church; but within the last few years, among other innovations, this truth has been also assailed. One reason only has even the show of weight. "The four beasts," the angel says to the prophet, "are four kings which shall arise out of the earth." But Babylon had already arisen. And this has been thought a fatal objection to the received view, and a clear proof that the lion is the symbol of a different empire from the head of gold.

Surely it is very rash and unwise to reject the concurrent judgment of divines, through fifteen centuries, upon no other evidence than this refined and subtle objection. Every book almost of Scripture will furnish examples to refute it. For instance, the word of God solemnly announced to the Jews in the desert, "Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years." The reasoning in the objection would prove this statement to be untrue; for nearly a year and a half out of the forty years had already expired when this warning was given. So also with the words of Elizabeth to the Virgin, and the two-fold declaration of the Apostle, "All Israel shall be saved." "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Every other argument, without exception, proves the sameness of the empires in the two visions. The num-

ber is the same, four in each. The starting point is the same; for each was given while Babylon was the ruling power. The issue is the same; for both are immediately followed by the visible kingdom of Christ. The order is the same; for the kingdoms in the first vision, as all admit, are successive; and, in the other, there are no less than seven or eight clauses which denote a succession in time. There is the same gradation; for the most precious metal and the noblest animal take the lead in each series. Further, the kingdoms in each vision are described as occupying the whole space till the dominion of the saints of God. This is the plain import of the words of the angel.—"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth; but the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever and ever."

In fact, the true sense of these four kingdoms may be learned, almost without an inference, from the direct and explicit statements of Holy Writ. The first empire is that of Babylon; for to the king of Babylon it was said, "Thou art this head of gold." If we require the names of the two next kingdoms, the angel Gabriel continues the message of the Prophet,—"The ram having the two horns, is the kings of Media and Persia." "The rough goat is the king of Grecia." If we ask the name and character of the fourth empire, the evangelist supplies the answer,—"There went out a decree from *Cæsar Augustus*, that all the world should be taxed." "If we let him alone, all men will believe on him, and *the Romans* will come and take away both our place and nation." And thus four supreme and ruling kingdoms, and four only, are announced by name in the word of God, from the time of Daniel to the close of the sacred canon.

Let us now review, for a moment, the scope of these opening visions, and the view of the four empires already established will appear with fresh evidence of its truth. The occasion of these prophecies was the captivity of Israel. And hence their main purpose was to

cheer and sustain the people of God, through ages of delay and frequent suffering, till the kingdom of Messiah should appear in its glory. For this end it was needful to give a continuous outline of the worldly powers to succeed, that the delay might not seem interminable and without end. Now such is the message given in these two visions. It is revealed that four empires only were to appear in succession, and then the everlasting reign of Messiah would begin. To break the continuous order of these kingdoms destroys the main purpose of the revelation. And the whole detail of the prophecy shews that the fourth was to have the longest duration, and to be most vitally connected with the fortunes of the Church of God.

Again, the four empires are not only a complete succession in time, reaching from the days of the prophet to the future glory of Israel; they are also a complete succession in territory and position. Each retains its being after its rule is past. And therefore each of them claims to itself a distinct portion of the earth's surface, which gives it a separate being, whether ruling, or subject to a foreign power. And this succession is complete. From Babylon and Persia in the East to the shores of the Atlantic, the lands have been occupied by one or other of these powers; and when Rome conquered and incorporated the tribes of Spain, Gaul, and Britain, the crowning proof was given of its character as the fourth kingdom. On this wide chart, the mystery of providence was now to be unfolded, till the voice of the seventh angel should announce its close with the trump of God.

But there is also a moral completeness in the emblems of this prophecy, as well as a complete series in place and time. The empires are set forth in two visions, to the heathen monarch, and to the beloved prophet of God. The king of Babylon gazes with surprise and wonder on an image of terrible brightness—a fit emblem of the vain glory of the world, as it appears before the eye of the unbeliever. It seems to have been

this deep impression of wonder and admiration which led him soon after to set up the image of gold on the plain of Dura, and to command the worship of the assembled people. Thus, by the sin of the monarch, was revealed the true character of these earthly kingdoms ; and it was shewn that the worship of human pride and ambition leads to persecution of the truth, and open idolatry. The sentence on the pride of the king is, to be debased into the resemblance of a beast of the field. In harmony with this parable, the prophet beholds the four empires, not in the false splendour of the idol of gold, but degraded into the likeness of four wild beasts of prey. The visions exhibit to us the course of the world as it is seen by the worldling and by the devout Christian, in the sight of man and in the sight of God. And thus, in these few chapters, the Church for more than two thousand years has been provided with a clear light, to reveal to her the place where she stands in the vast field of providence, to unmask the deceits of the world, and to clothe her with Divine armour in each successive hour of conflict and trial.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE EMPIRE OF BABYLON.

DANIEL II. 31, 32.—"THOU, O KING, SAWEST, AND BEHOLD A GREAT IMAGE. THIS GREAT IMAGE, WHOSE BRIGHTNESS WAS EXCELLENT, STOOD BEFORE THEE; AND THE FORM THEREOF WAS TERRIBLE. THIS IMAGE'S HEAD WAS OF FINE GOLD."

37, 38.—"THOU, O KING, ART A KING OF KINGS; FOR THE GOD OF HEAVEN HATH GIVEN THEE A KINGDOM, POWER, AND STRENGTH, AND GLORY. AND WHERESOEVER THE CHILDREN OF MEN DWELL, THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD, AND THE FOWLS OF HEAVEN HATH HE GIVEN INTO THINE HAND, AND HATH MADE THEE RULER OVER THEM ALL. THOU ART THIS HEAD OF GOLD."

VII. 2—4.—"I SAW IN MY VISION BY NIGHT, AND, BEHOLD, THE FOUR WINDS OF THE HEAVEN STROVE UPON THE GREAT SEA. AND FOUR GREAT BEASTS CAME UP FROM THE SEA, DIVERSE ONE FROM ANOTHER. THE FIRST WAS LIKE A LION, AND HAD EAGLE'S WINGS: I BEHELD TILL THE WINGS THEREOF WERE PLUCKED, AND IT WAS LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, AND MADE STAND UPON THE FEET AS A MAN, AND A MAN'S HEART WAS GIVEN TO IT."

THE history of the first prophetic empire, Babylon, is the period where sacred and profane history meet and combine together. Till the reign, however, of Cyrus, and the Persian kingdom, the materials of direct comparison are few. Yet there are several reasons which make it useful to dwell on the first stage of the prophecy. The sacred writings themselves here supply the thread of history, and interpret their own meaning. The chronology is given in the prophets with peculiar fulness; and being confirmed by the witness of profane authors, forms a clear and firm point of departure for the whole series of the later predictions. The whole period abounds also with typical lessons, which reflect a steady light

on the course and moral nature of Gentile dominion, till it closes in the full redemption of Israel and the kingdom of our Lord. Let us first, by the help of Scripture, trace the course of those events which fulfilled the prophecy; and then deduce those typical or practical lessons which every part of the history reveals.

I. The most valuable record of this period, independent of Scripture, is the canon of Ptolemy. The length of each reign is there given, expressed in Egyptian years, and dated from the era of Nabonassar, A.C. 747. The Egyptian year consisted of 365 days, without intercalation; and its *Thoth*, or commencement, will thus fall later in the Julian year the higher we ascend. The accession of each monarch, in the canon, is referred to the beginning of the year in which his reign began. Hence the date of each king, referred to this nominal commencement will be as follows:

Asaradanus	13	A.N. 68	Feb. 10	A.C. 680
Saosduchinus	20	... 81	Feb. 6	667
Chynaladanus	22	... 101	Feb. 1	647
Nabopolassar	21	... 123	Jan. 27	625
Nabocolassar	43	... 144	Jan. 22	604
Ilvarodamus	2	... 187	Jan. 11	561
Nericolassar	4	... 189	11	559
Nabonadius	17	... 193	10	555
Cyrus	9	... 210	Jan. 6	538
Cambyses	8	... 219	Jan. 3	529

Let us now combine this external evidence with the testimony of the sacred writers, and thus compare the prophetic vision, in its earliest part, with the inspired record of its fulfilment.

The Jewish theocracy, while it lasted, was in God's sight the foremost of the kingdoms of the world. For it was the kingdom of God himself, and a type of that future dominion of Christ which shall last for ever. And hence no other monarchy could be recognized as universal or supreme, till Israel had been formally re-

jected, and visibly cast off from their national eminence for their transgressions. Till the sins of the ten tribes were full, there is scarce any mention in the word of God of the Assyrian kings. But then, Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser begin to appear as the instruments of Divine vengeance, and the greatness of the Assyrian power gleams out in dim and sublime magnificence. Judah, however, was still under a faithful king: the measure of her sin was not full; and hence all the power and pride of Sennacherib were dashed into ruin, when he sought to overwhelm God's chosen people. That stroke and the troubles which followed seem to have broken the power of Nineveh, and Babylon, under Merodach-baladan and his successors, rose to a superior eminence. Yet the sin of Judah was not yet full; and therefore Babylon, checked by the rival power of Egypt till the reign of Pharaoh Necho, could not establish a decisive supremacy in the east. But as soon as the chosen people had filled up their iniquity, the predestined times of the Gentiles began; and the first year of Judah's captivity was also the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's power, and the prophetic date of the Babylonian monarchy.

The year of that monarch's accession, in the Canon, is A. C. 604. And to this date the prophet refers in the vision of the Image, which is said to be in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. But it appears, from other passages, that this monarch began to reign conjointly with his father two years earlier; and from this earlier accession his years, and those of the captivity, are reckoned in every other place. This appears from Daniel's own narrative. He and his fellows were nourished three full years to stand before the king. Yet the vision was interpreted in Nebuchadnezzar's second year. Hence the separation of those youths must have been more than one, and less than two years before his accession, and their captivity still earlier. Now this took place in the third of Jehoiakim, the time which is elsewhere called the first of Nebuchadnezzar. Hence at Babylon, the seat of empire, the reign of the king was

dated from the death of his father, A. C. 604 ; but in Judea, two years earlier, A. C. 606, from his actual supreme command over the Babylonian forces.

There is another remark which seems to result from comparing the canon with Scripture, and which simplifies the chronology. The canon refers each reign to the beginning of the current Egyptian year, not to its actual date. In a similar manner the reigns in the sacred history are referred to the beginning of the Jewish year, generally of that which precedes, but sometimes of that which follows. Thus we are told, that the fourth year of Hezekiah was the seventh of Hoshea, the sixth of Hezekiah was the ninth of Hoshea, the fourth of Jehoiakim was the first of Nebuchadnezzar, the tenth of Zedekiah was the eighteenth of Nebuchadnezzar. Now this sameness could not exist if the years were reckoned from the actual accessions, and they are therefore reckoned in each case from the beginning of the Jewish year.

Let us now trace the history of this first prophetic empire from the testimony of the sacred text. Under Jehoiakim, and after the death of Josiah, A. C. 609, the cup of national iniquity was full. At the close of his third, and the beginning of his fourth year, Nebuchadnezzar was sent to execute the divine judgments, March and April, A. C. 606 ; and with that year the captivity of Judah and the prophetic empire of Babylon begin together. Two prophecies of Jeremiah were given to announce this signal era, and to mark the limit of Babylon's power. The first, in chapter xxv., relates to the captivity itself.

" The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the *fourth year* of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah (A.C. 606), that was the *first year* of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

" From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, (A.C. 628) even unto this day, that is

the three-and-twentieth year, the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking ; but ye have not hearkened. And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them ; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given to you and to your fathers for ever and ever. And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands ; and I will do you no hurt. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord ; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts ; Because ye have not heard my words, Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment ; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon *seventy years.*

"And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also : and I will

recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands."

Such was the solemn decree of the Most High, which marks this important era, and by which His chosen people were delivered over for their sins into the hand of Babylon. The kingdom of David and Solomon, that glorious type of good things to come, was now overturned in the dust, and the long period of the Gentile monarchies began. But as the first of those kingdoms had here its precise bounds assigned, which it might not pass, so the whole course of them is expressly revealed in these visions of Daniel. Fixed times are also given to the Church, like the seventy years, to be understood when that whole period should be approaching towards its final close.

A second prophecy, in chapter xxvii., exhibits the same great era in connection with the supreme power given to Babylon, and the subjection of the other Gentile nations.

"In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, came this word unto Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,

"Thus saith the Lord to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah; And command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters.

"I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come; and then

many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon; that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord; and they shall till it, and dwell therein."

In this solemn and impressive manner was the first prophetic empire instated, by God himself, in the possession of a supreme dominion. But its bound was doubly assigned, like the abode of Israel in Egypt, which was predicted by years and by generations. Its appointed term was to be seventy years, and it was to cease under the son's son of the reigning monarch. Both of these assigned marks of its duration were accomplished at the fall of Belshazzar, when the second or Medo-Persian empire succeeded in its room.

There is one further remark which suggests itself on this last prediction. Its language is the very same with the words of Daniel, when he expounds to Nebuchadnezzar himself the meaning of the head of gold. The terms denote universal dominion. Yet, in fact, the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar never reached into Europe, nor perhaps into Africa beyond the bounds of Egypt. Hence the terms are clearly used, not in a strict, but in a popular sense, and refer to the nations which were then prominent in history, the kingdoms of the east. Over the rest there might be a virtual supremacy, in their acknowledgment of Babylon as the most powerful of existing nations; but there could be no direct and immediate control. And this teaches us the need of caution in other prophetic visions; and that we must not strain the meaning of their words beyond the pattern of this inspired interpretation. When it is said, Rev. xiii. "All that dwell on the earth shall worship" the beast; we can have no warrant from

the words alone to require a greater relative dominion than that which was exercised by the king of Babylon.

The history of Daniel begins at the same point of time. "In the third year of Jehoiakim king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hands." This was probably early in spring, B. C. 606, just after the commencement of the Jewish year. It was the merciful provision of God that, in this season of distress, three prophets should be provided for the comfort of the faithful, Jeremiah in Judea, Ezekiel among the dispersed captives, and Daniel at the court of the king of Babylon. The same year a decisive event announced the power of the rising monarchy, in the total defeat of the Egyptians. This was announced by Jeremiah, xlvi. and fulfilled in that very year. The message was sent "against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, son of Josiah king of Judah." From that date, even till now, Egypt has been degraded from its ancient glory, and has been, under various dynasties, a subject nation.

The events of five intervening years are not recorded. But in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, (A.C. 600.) there was another stage in the captivity, and three thousand three hundred and twenty Jews were carried away to Babylon. Among these, it is probable, was Ezekiel the prophet, who shortly after began to prophecy by the river Chebar to the other exiles of the Jews.

After the death of Jehoiakim, Jeconiah reigned for three months only, and was then led away to Babylon (A. D. 598) at the close of the Jewish year. The captivity was now still more complete. Meanwhile Nebuchadnezzar continued his conquests, and the warnings of Ezekiel and Jeremiah became still more solemn and earnest. At length the perjury of Zedekiah, denounced by the former prophet, (Ezek. xvii.) sealed the fall of

Jerusalem. In his ninth year, and the tenth month, (Jan. 589) at the close of that sabbatic rest which the Jews had broken, and for which the curse had been denounced, (Jer. xxxiv.) the siege of Jerusalem began. After eighteen months (July, 588) the city was broken up, the temple destroyed, the sons of Zedekiah slain, the eyes of the king put out, and he himself was led a prisoner to Babylon. From this fall of the temple a second date of the captivity begins, to which the prophet Zechariah afterwards makes allusion. Several Jews had been led away captive in the previous year, and four years later, another and vast company of them were removed from the land. (Jer. lii.)

The next conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, according to Josephus, were Coele-Syria, Moab, and Ammon. But the siege of Tyre was the most laborious and the most barren triumph. The same year that the temple fell, Ezekiel had given warning to the merchant city, as Isaiah had done a hundred and fifty years earlier. The words of that warning are very impressive, and were, in the first stage of the judgment, speedily fulfilled.

"It came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste: Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and it shall become a spoil to the nations. . . . For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much

people. He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field : and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee. And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers. By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee : thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets : he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground."

This siege of Tyre seems to have lasted for about seven, or, according to Dius, even thirteen years. The inhabitants, many of them, escaped in this interval, and transported their riches to the island. Insular Tyre thus arose on the ruins of the old city. To this result of the siege allusion is made in another prophecy, where the next conquest of Nebuchadnezzar is predicted, that of Egypt.

" And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year, in the first month, in the first day of the month, (April, 572) the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a good service against Tyrus : every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled : yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it : Therefore thus saith the Lord God : Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon ; and he shall take her multitude, and take her spoil, and take her prey ; and it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour wherewith he served against it, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord God."

The next two or three years seem to have been occupied with this conquest of Egypt, and, according to Megasthenes, of Libya also. After this career of

victory the king returned to Babylon, which he beautified and enlarged. It was now, in the height of his power and magnificence (A. C. 569) that he uttered that exulting boast, "Is not this great Babylon which I have builded, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty!" Then, while the word was in the king's mouth, the predicted sentence was fulfilled, and the monarch suddenly debased from the height of his greatness, into a maniac, herding with the beasts of the field. After seven years of this signal abasement, the lesson of divine holiness and power was complete. (A. C. 562.) "At the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

Such is the magnificent lesson of divine power and greatness which closed the eventful course of this monarch's history, and the brightest period of the first empire of gold. The narrative of Scripture is confirmed by the remaining fragments of Berosus and Megasthenes; the former writes as follows:

'Nebuchodonosor, as soon as he received intelligence of his father's death, set in order the affairs of Egypt and the other countries, and committed to some of his faithful officers the captives he had taken from the

Jews, the Phenicians, and Syrians, and the nations belonging to Egypt, that they might conduct them with the heavy armed forces, together with the rest of his baggage, to Babylonia: in the mean time, with a few attendants, he hastily crossed the desert to Babylon. When he arrived there, he found that his affairs had been faithfully conducted by the Chaldeans, and that the principal person among them had preserved the kingdom for him; and he accordingly obtained possession of all his father's dominions.

'And he distributed the captives in colonies in the most proper places of Babylonia, and adorned the temple of Belus, and the other temples, in a sumptuous and pious manner, out of the spoils which he had taken in this war. He also rebuilt the old city, and added another to it on the outside, and so far completed Babylon, that none who might besiege it afterwards should have it in their power to divert the river, so as to effect their entrance; and for this end he built three walls about the inner city, and three about the other. When he had thus admirably fortified the city, and had magnificently adorned the gates, he added also a new palace to those in which his forefathers dwelt, adjoining them, but exceeding them in height and splendour. Any attempt to describe it would be tedious; yet notwithstanding its prodigious size and magnificence it was finished within fifteen days. In this palace he erected very high walls, supported by stone pillars; and by planting what was called a pensile paradise, and replenishing it with all sorts of trees, he rendered the prospect an exact resemblance of a mountainous country. This he did to gratify his queen, who was brought up in Media, and was fond of a mountainous situation.' (Cory, Frag. p. 40.)[1]

In like manner Polyhistor writes. 'Then reigned Nabuchodrossorus forty three years; and he came with a mighty army, and led the Jews, and Phenicians, and Syrians into captivity.'

The fragment of Megasthenes seems clearly to be an

obscure tradition of that wisdom and prophetic foresight which Nebuchadnezzar had obtained by the vision which Daniel expounded. 'Nebuchodrossorus,' he says, 'having become more powerful than Hercules, invaded Lybia and Iberia, and having made them tributary, extended his conquests over the shores on the right of the sea. Afterwards, it is said by the Chaldeans, that as he went up into his palace he was possessed by a god; and he cried out and said, O Babylonians, I Nebuchodrossorus foretel you a calamity which must shortly come to pass, which neither Belus my ancestor, nor his queen Beltis, have power to persuade the fates to turn away. A Persian mule shall come, and by the assistance of your gods shall impose on you the yoke of slavery; the author of which shall be a Mede, the boast of Assyria.'

Probably in the same year, after his restoration to kingly honours, Nebuchadnezzar died, and Evil-merodach his son, succeeded. (Jan—March 561.) Here the same witnesses concur with scripture. Thus Berosus: 'Nabuchodonosor, while building the wall, fell sick, and died after he had reigned forty-three years; and his son Evil-merodachus succeeded him in his kingdom. His government, however, was conducted in an illegal and improper manner, and he fell a victim to a conspiracy formed against his life by Neriglissorus, his sister's husband, after he had reigned about two years.' And Megasthenes: 'When he had thus prophesied, he expired, and was succeeded by his son Evil-maluruchus, who was slain by his kinsman Neriglisarus.'

Of the reign of Evil-merodach only one event is noted in scripture, but this is of great importance, as the connecting link of sacred and profane chronology. It is twice given in the same words, at the close of the second book of Kings, and of Jeremiah's prophecies.

"And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year

that he began to reign, did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison ; And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon ; And changed his prison garments : and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life."

Nearly at the same time with this accession of Evil-merodach, (Jan. 561.) Cyrus began to reign in Persia, and the decline of the Babylonian power speedily followed. Of the reign of Neriglissar, who conspired against Evil-merodach, and the few months' reign of Laborosoarchod, we have apparently no mention in scripture, the whole period being only about four years. In the history of the last king there is some discrepancy among profane historians. The following are the accounts of Berosus, Megasthenes, and Polyhistor.

' Upon the death of Evil-merodach, Neriglissoorus, chief of the conspirators, obtained possession of the kingdom, and reigned four years. He was succeeded by his son Laborosoarchod, who was but a child, and reigned nine months ; for his misconduct he was seized by conspirators and put to death by torture. After his death, the conspirators by common consent placed the crown on the head of Nabonnedus, a man of Babylon, one of the leaders in the insurrection. In his reign the walls of Babylon which defend the banks of the river were curiously built with burnt brick and bitumen.'

' In the seventeenth year of the reign of Nabonnedus, Cyrus came out of Persia with a great army, and having conquered all the rest of Asia, advanced hastily into Babylonia. Nabonnedus, perceiving his approach, assembled his forces and opposed him ; but was defeated, and fled with a few of his adherents, and was shut up in the city of Borsippus. Upon this Cyrus took Babylon, and gave orders that the outer wall should be demolished, because the city appeared of such strength as to render a siege almost impracticable. From thence

he marched to Borsippus to besiege Nabonnedus; but Nabonnedus delivered himself without holding out the siege; and therefore Cyrus, treating him kindly, gave him a dwelling in Carmania, but sent him out of Babylonia.' (Borosus, Cory. Frag. p. 41.)

'Neriglisares left Labassoarascus his son; and when he also had suffered death by violence, they crowned Nabannidochus, who had no connection with the royal family; and in his reign Cyrus took Babylon, and granted him a principality in Carmania.' (Megasth. Cory. Frag. p. 45.)

'After him Neglisarus reigned over the Chaldeans four years; and then Nabodenus seventeen years. In his reign Cyrus the son of Cambyses invaded the country of the Babylonians. Nabodenus went out to give him battle, but was defeated, and betook himself to flight, and Cyrus reigned at Babylon nine years.' (Polyhistor. Frag. p. 63.)

The account of Herodotus seems in more direct accordance with the scripture narrative. He tells us that Cyrus marched against the son of queen Nitocris, who had the name of his own father, Labynetus, and the rule of Assyria. He was delayed one year at the river Gyndes, and in the second year marched against Babylon, and the Babylonians met him in battle, and were defeated, and shut up within the city. But as they had prepared food for many years, they made light of the siege. Cyrus was now in great perplexity, since much time was spent, and the seige made no progress. He then devised the plan of diverting the course of the river. 'And when this was done, the Persians who had been assigned for that post, entered by the bed of the river Euphrates, which had ebbed to the height only of the thighs, and so went into Babylon. If now the Babylonians had perceived beforehand or known what was done by Cyrus, they would not have overlooked the Persians entering into the city, but would have destroyed them wretchedly. For shutting all the gates which led to the river, and themselves mounting on the walls by the

brink, they would have taken them as in a net. But now the Persians came upon them unexpectedly. And from the size of the city, as those report who dwell there, when those at the confines were taken, those Babylonians who dwell in the middle did not learn of the capture, but (*for it happened to be a feast of theirs*) they were dancing at the time, and in high revelry, until indeed they knew it only too well ; and thus for the first time Babylon was taken.'

The account of Xenophon is very similar. 'Those within the walls,' he says, 'laughed at the siege, as having provisions for twenty years. But Cyrus divided his army into twelve parts, as if each were to invest for one month. And the Babylonians, hearing of it, scorned it much more, asking whether the Phrygians, and Lydians, and Arabians, and Cappadocians, would besiege them, whom they thought more friendly to themselves than to the Persians. And the trenches were now at length completed. But Cyrus, when he heard that there was a feast in Babylon, in which all the Babylonians drink and revel all the night ; as soon as it grew dark, taking many men, opened the trenches to the river. Thus the water by night turned along the trenches, and the bed of the river through the city became passable for men. . . . And Gadatas and Gobryas came ; and first reverenced the gods, because they had punished the unholy king, and then kissed the hands and feet of Cyrus, weeping much and exulting for joy. And when it was day, and those who held the citadels, perceived that the city was taken, and the King slain, they gave up the citadels also. . . . And Cyrus enjoined that the Babylonians should till the land, and *render tribute*, and do service to those to whom each of them were committed ; and ordered them to regard the Persians as the Lords of the things which they had taken.'

The agreement of these last accounts with the inspired narrative of Belshazzar's overthrow is full and complete. On the other hand, the view which some

have advanced, that Nabonadius is Darius the Mede, is inconsistent with Scripture and with all the historians. But it is not plain, at first sight, how the testimony of Berosus and Megasthenes is to be reconciled with Daniel and the Greek histories. Yet perhaps the difficulty is not so great as some have imagined. It is clear that after the death of Evil-merodach the succession was very unsettled. Laborosoarchod, it is true, was a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, by his daughter; but he could not be Belshazzar, as his reign was less than a year, and is therefore omitted in the canon. But Nebuchadnezzar doubtless had other grandsons, one of whom would be the natural heir to the throne. Nabonadius was, confessedly, an usurper, and had no apparent pretensions to royal birth. We may suppose, then, either of two alternatives. Nabonadius might act the part towards Belshazzar which the mayors of the palace did to the Merovingian kings, and Belshazzar's indolent and luxurious character might enable the other to exercise the power and escape the odium of royalty. Or else, on the defeat of Nabonadius, Belshazzar or Labynetus, the legitimate successor, might be reinstated on the throne by the help of the queen mother, the widow of Evil-merodach or of Neriglissar. His reign might then be dated either from the death of Laborosoarchod, or from his own accession, as in the parallel case of Charles the Second. On either supposition the two accounts would be harmonized. Nabonadius, the usurper, or sovereign deputy, might be defeated, shut up in Borsippus, and afterward retire into Carmania. Labynetus or Belshazzar, the lawful king, and grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, might be besieged by the Persians in Babylon, and slain on the night of the great feast. And if the Persians, as would appear from Berosus compared with Xenophon, were far more favourable to Nabonadius, this may account for his name being preferred to Labynetus or Belshazzar in the canon of the kings.

The inspired narrative of Daniel is thus fully con-

firmed by Herodotus and Xenophon, and the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy attested by three distinct witnesses. He had declared, two hundred years before, that Cyrus, a Persian king, should overthrow Babylon, and that the bed of the river should be dried for his entrance, and the gates of the city not be shut against him. Josiah the last reformer of Israel, and Cyrus their great deliverer, are the only two monarchs whom the Spirit of God has seen fit thus to announce by their own name, long before their birth ; and they are each of them a striking type of the true Messiah, who shall restore to his people a pure worship, and ransom them for ever from all their proudest enemies.

II. The history of the First Empire has now been traced, by the light of Scripture and other testimonies, down to the time of its fall. But there are several features of the prophecy which call for a further notice, and many lessons may be drawn from the record to illustrate the whole course of these sacred visions.

The description of the First Empire, both in Jeremiah and Daniel, (Jer. xxvii. 1—7. Dan. ii. 37, 38.) has a remarkable resemblance to the charter of dominion which was given to Man on the day of creation. Not only the children of men, but the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, are solemnly delivered into the hand of the king. The analogy between the Great Image and the wide-spread tradition of the four ages of the world has often been noticed. These words of the prophet exhibit the same tradition, stripped of all fiction, in a practical and striking form. After the close of the visible theocracy which the Most High had set up on earth, and while the spiritual Church was preparing for its glory, it was His purpose to exhibit fallen humanity, in all its various stages, from its highest dignity to its lowest decay. Under the first kingdom, and its great monarch, the glory of the natural man was to be presented in a form, like that in Paradise, of lofty and imperial command. But while the Church should

be gradually preparing for its final union, the world was to sink gradually from its splendour into a miry sensual debasement. And yet the description of the king of Babylon is an earnest of man's recovered dignity in the ages to come; and the kingdom of the mountain shall far exceed in honour the sublime character of the head of gold. Man's dominion over nature shall then be restored, and all creation be made visibly subject to the second Adam and his redeemed people.

The eagle wings of the lion are a fit emblem of Nebuchadnezzar's ambition. They express the strength of his monarchy, and the ambitious daring of his lofty spirit. They began to be plucked, when that voice from heaven arrested him in the midst of his pride—"O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: thy kingdom is departed from thee." And this prostration of strength and greatness continued and increased under his successors, while the growing conquests of Darius the Mede and Cyrus weakened and abased the once mighty empire.

The plucking of these wings is the first action described in the vision of the four beasts. And this corresponds with its date in the second of Belshazzar. For under that king, in the last seventeen years of the monarchy, the work of debasement and dissolution went on apace, till it was completed amidst the revelry of the ungodly feast.

The lion was made to stand on its feet as a man, and to receive a man's heart, in that last festival; when the handwriting awoke the slumbering conscience of Belshazzar, and he acknowledged, too late, the dominion of God. The fierce and mighty lion, standing in feeble attitude, and receiving a human heart, fitly denotes the proud and cruel empire, humbled in the person of its last monarch to hear the voice of God, and to tremble at the sentence of its own doom.

The words of the prophet—"Thou art this head of gold"—apply to the king simply as the ruler of the empire, as those which introduce them clearly prove.

Hence they can yield no warrant for dating the image from the birth of Nebuchadnezzar ; and besides, the date of that event is unknown. But the periods of Scripture begin from eras known and well defined. The image dates solely from the captivity, when the Divine theocracy was rejected and overthrown. Yet the same words imply that the history of Nebuchadnezzar, while he was king, represents and typifies that of the whole image. Hence the idol-worship on the plains of Dura, the persecution of the three witnesses, their miraculous preservation, and the repentance of the monarch, are types of great truths to be fulfilled through all the four empires, and in the kingdom of Messiah which succeeds them. So also the mighty tree, its sentence and fall, the bands of iron and brass, and its final recovery, with the seven times to pass over it,—are types, in like manner, of the long debasement of worldly power, and its final recovery and redemption in the kingdom of God. Viewed in this light, the interposed narratives (Dan. iii. iv.) form a glorious illustration of these sacred visions, and clothe them with a majestic grandeur and moral sublimity of Divine truth and holiness.

The title of Babylon is applied in the Apocalypse to the seat of the Fourth Empire. This illustrates, in a beautiful manner, the unity of the whole succession of Gentile kingdoms. Confusion is their name ; because they have never fully received the true source of order and union, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. Two thousand years before the time of Nebuchadnezzar the city had been called Babel ; and when the seat of worldly power is removed far away to the seven hills of Rome, it still retains, in a mystery, the same title. The strict historical sense, indeed, and local application of the literal and mystical Babylon, must never be cast aside ; but the moral significance of the name ought equally to be kept in view. Whether in Chaldea under the first empire, or under the fourth, on the banks of the Tiber, as in the days of Nimrod the mighty hunter,

Babylon is still the city of confusion, and the moral contrast of Jerusalem, the city of holiness, and the abode of peace.

III. Let us now endeavour to derive a few general lessons from this brief review of the history of Babylon.

And first, we read here, in an affecting light, the transient and fleeting nature of all worldly greatness. In the time of the prophets, and during the half century which passed between these two visions, Babylon was in the height of its grandeur, and the exploits of its proud monarch filled the ear and eye of the civilized world. Greece had scarce emerged from obscurity; Rome was still buried amidst the barbarous Latin tribes. Britain, Spain, and Gaul, and the countries of the west, were the abode of scattered, nomade tribes, and scarcely known, even by name, to the great kingdoms of the East, the birthplace and nursery of mankind. But Aram and the plains of the Euphrates were crowded with inhabitants, covered with fertility, ennobled by art, science, and every form of human greatness. Populous and mighty cities lined the course of the two mighty rivers of Paradise, and Babylon stood forth in stupendous and unequalled magnificence, the mistress of the world. And what now remains of all this greatness? Apart from the inspired word, a few scattered fragments of history, scarce amounting to twenty pages; and a few mounds of earth and dreary ruins, that scarcely break the monotony of one unbroken plain of desolation! What an affecting illustration of those words, "Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like unto the beasts that perish!" The sites which once formed the proud pinnacle of the world's greatness, are now forsaken and desolate. Few care even to inquire into their past history or present state. When, of late, a British steamer sailed up the Euphrates to explore its ruins, and the triumph of modern science were seen in strange contrasts with the river that watered Paradise, by the tower of Nimrod, or the ruined palace of Semi-

ramis, the wonderful spectacle could scarce arrest, for one moment, the busy children of the world, or awaken them to adore the everlasting and unchangeable God. But surely the review of this wondrous change should lead the Christian to deep reflection and adoring reverence. The time will come, in the everlasting kingdom of Christ, when the present system of worldly power and human interests will be, as Babylon is now, like the dream of a night vision. The image which now dazzles the eyes of mortals will have disappeared, and eternal realities alone will remain. The kingdom of God will have consumed all other kingdoms, and itself will abide for ever.

The power of the first empire had its period strictly defined. It was to last only seventy years. It began and closed with the captivity of Judah. The harps of the exiles were on the willows, while Babylon was revelling in its pride. And this was a parable for the time to come, until the last of the four empires should have given place to Messiah's kingdom. The continuance of the powers of this world is strictly defined. The times of the Gentiles have their appointed bound. While they continue, Israel will be scattered, and the true church of Christ will have still to wait for the redemption to come. But when those times are fulfilled, the joyful deliverance will ensue, and the loud voices in heaven will proclaim the tidings, "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." And just as Daniel, when the time drew near to its close, understood by books the number and date of the seventy years' captivity ; so, when the times of the Gentiles have nearly run their course, the Church may expect the mysterious dates to be gradually unsealed, and again be stirred up to prayer and hope by the distinct assurance that her redemption is drawing nigh.

After the bright and terrible image had been revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, he set up the idol image for worship on the plains of Dura, under penalty of death. The world,

and the course of the world, is the true idol of the carnal mind, and all other idols are types and shadows of this deeper idolatry. And not even the revealed truth that this glory is transient and soon to be swept away, can prevent it from dazzling the eyes of men, till they are opened by divine grace, and learn, as the monarch did by abasing experience, the evil of sin, the majesty of God, and the fulness of his Divine compassion.

But there is a further lesson to be gained from that remarkable narrative of the golden image, and the furnace of fire. It is a parable of the general course of the four kingdoms. Under the pomp and show of the world, even in the times of apparent calm, there is couched a secret spirit of anger and persecution against the witnesses of Divine truth. The inquisitors of heretical pravity have rivalled and surpassed, in later ages, the zeal of the Babylonian king. Never has the furnace been more heated against those who resolve to worship God alone than by men who have gloried in the Christian name. But hitherto the parable has been fulfilled in part only. A blessed change will at length ensue. The faithful witness of the confessors of Christ will at length usher in that glorious period, when all kings shall turn from idols to worship the Son of God, and shall own that He was present with His people in their deepest sufferings. "Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord, that great is the glory of the Lord."

A lesson of no less interest, and full of deep instruction, may be drawn from the other parable in the same history. The stately tree of Nebuchadnezzar's vision reveals to us the true purpose of human government. It is "the ordinance of God" to shelter, protect, and bless the people who are made subject to its power. The long debasement of the king which is there described, is a type of those dreary ages in which secular power should refuse its true office, and be turned aside by selfishness, pride, and ambition: till its natural dignity, in God's sight, should be sunk in a low and bestial degradation. In the stump of its roots, which continued

in the ground, joined with the monarch's final recovery, we may see a vivid picture of that latent power which human government, in its worst declension, still retains to be a blessing to the people. This hidden virtue, never extinct, though sore hindred by ambition and wickedness, will blossom forth at last, in the kingdom of God, with inconceivable excellence and in forms of unknown beauty.

The instruction is not less deep or impressive conveyed to us by the narrative of that royal feast, in which Belshazzar fell, and his kingdom was overthrown. There is reflected to our view, as in a mirror, the careless revelling of the last days, before the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. Then once more the worldling will be suddenly aroused, at midnight, from the trance of sensual pleasure. Then will the songs of the drunkard be turned into wailing, and the tears of the penitent into everlasting joy. The kingdom of Satan, the prince of this world, will be numbered and finished. The hypocrite and deceiver will then be weighed in a true balance, be found wanting and condemned. The mystic Babylon, the city of confusion, will be broken up and destroyed ; and the true Cyrus, with the armies in heaven, shall take the kingdom, and possess it for ever and ever.

The First Empire, therefore, in its rise, its power, the sin and apostasy of its people, and its final ruin, is a standing monument of God's holy providence to the latest age. It is also a beacon of hope amidst the severest trials of the church of God. As surely as the three children were rescued unhurt from the furnace ; or Nebuchadnezzar restored, on confession, to his kingly power ; as surely as Cyrus overthrew the empire, and reigned in triumph upon its fall ; so surely will a kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy, succeed to all the troubled storms of sin and violence in this lower world. The heavens and the earth may pass away, but the promise of God standeth sure ; and the children of God shall yet witness new heavens and a new earth, wherein righteousness shall dwell for ever.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE EMPIRES OF PERSIA AND GREECE.

A.C. 531—201.

DANIEL II. 32. —"THIS IMAGE'S HEAD WAS OF FINE GOLD, HIS BREAST AND HIS ARMS OF SILVER, HIS BELLY AND HIS THIGHS OF BRASS."

39.—"AND AFTER THEE SHALL ARISE ANOTHER KINGDOM INFERIOR TO THEE, AND ANOTHER THIRD KINGDOM OF BRASS, WHICH SHALL BEAR RULE OVER ALL THE EARTH."

VII. 5. 6.—"AND BEHOLD ANOTHER BEAST, A SECOND, LIKE TO A BEAR, AND IT RAISED ITSELF ON ONE SIDE, AND IT HAD THREE RIBS IN THE MOUTH OF IT BETWEEN THE TEETH OF IT: AND THEY SAID THUS UNTO IT. ARISE, DEVOUR MUCH FLESH."

"AFTER THIS I BEHELD, AND LO ANOTHER LIKE A LEOPARD, WHICH HAD UPON THE BACK OF IT FOUR WINGS OF A FOWL; THE BEAST HAD ALSO FOUR HEADS; AND DOMINION WAS GIVEN TO IT.

VIII. 2—5.—"I SAW IN A VISION; AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN I SAW, THAT I WAS AT SHUSHAN IN THE PALACE, WHICH IS IN THE PROVINCE OF ELAM; AND I SAW IN A VISION, AND I WAS BY THE RIVER OF ULAI.

"THEN I LIFTED UP MINE EYES, AND SAW, AND BEHOLD, THERE STOOD BEFORE THE RIVER A RAM WHICH HAD TWO HORNS; AND THE TWO HORNS WERE HIGH; BUT ONE WAS HIGHER THAN THE OTHER, AND THE HIGHER CAME UP LAST."

"I SAW THE RAM PUSHING WESTWARD, AND NORTHWARD, AND SOUTHWARD; SO THAT NO BEASTS MIGHT STAND BEFORE HIM, NEITHER WAS THERE ANY THAT COULD DELIVER OUT OF HIS HAND; BUT HE DID ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, AND BECAME GREAT."

"AND AS I WAS CONSIDERING, BEHOLD AN HE GOAT CAME FROM THE WEST ON THE FACE OF THE WHOLE EARTH, AND TOUCHED NOT THE GROUND: AND THE GOAT HAD A NOTABLE HORN BETWEEN HIS EYES."

20, 21.—"THE RAM WHICH THOU SAWEST HAVING TWO HORNS ARE THE KINGS OF MEDIA AND PERSIA. AND THE ROUGH GOAT IS THE KING OF GRECIA: AND THE GREAT HORN THAT IS BETWEEN HIS EYES IS THE FIRST KING."

THE application of the second and third kingdom to Persia and Macedonia has already been clearly esta-

blished. The history of these empires belongs more properly to the two latter visions, where it is unfolded with larger details. The present chapter will, therefore, be confined to a few general remarks, which may illustrate the words of the prophecy, and confirm the truth of its usual interpretation.

1. The fundamental argument which fixes the true reference of these kingdoms, is of the simplest kind. The Medo-Persian empire was distinct from that of Babylon, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Herodotus, Xenophon, and the canon of Ptolemy, all combine to prove. And it was next in order to the Babylonian. Therefore, it must be the second kingdom of prophecy.

In like manner, the Grecian empire was distinct from the Persian, as all history bears witness. And it succeeded next in order of time. Therefore, it must needs be the third empire of the vision.

2. This conclusion is ratified, even by the express words of inspiration, in Dan. viii. The ram is the kings of Media and Persia; and the rough goat is the king of Grecia. Each of these is clearly a distinct ruling empire, by the very nature of the symbol. But the king of Babylon was the first, or the head of gold. Therefore these are the silver and brass; and by parity of reason, the bear and the leopard.

3. The minute indications all agree. The silver is inferior to the gold; and so also is the bear to the lion. The magnificent grandeur of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, was also never equalled by the Persian kings and their new capital of Susa. There was extension of size, as the first symbol denotes, but a plain and evident abatement of imperial majesty.

4. The breast and arms were silver. This seems to import some twofold division. So also the bear raised itself on one side, as if to denote two concurrent powers, of which one was inferior at the first. In like manner, the ram had two horns, of which the higher came up last. All these symbolic features agree with the angelic interpretation. "The ram having the two horns are the

kings of Media and Persia." The history, although perplexed in its details, always agrees in this main feature, that Media was at first the strongest power ; but, under the aspiring genius of Cyrus, yielded to the ascendant of Persia, and became the inferior part of the monarchy. Yet both shared in the sovereign power, and Scripture itself tells us that the seven princes of Media and Persia sat first in the kingdom. Even the title given to the invasion of Greece by classic historians, τὰ Μηδικὰ, bears witness to the same truth.

5. The bear had three ribs in its mouth, between its teeth. This version seems to accord better with the close of the verse than the rendering of *tusks*, which some have proposed, and it also harmonizes more fully with the symbol employed. Again, in the later vision the ram is said to push westward, and northward, and southward. These three directions of conquest answer exactly to the three ribs in the mouth of the bear.

The events of history correspond. For first, it is clear from the date of the prophecy, which was within three or four years after the accession of Cyrus, and shortly before his conquest of Lydia, that the vision must refer to that time. It would be quite unnatural to pass by the most signal conquests of Persia, those of Cyrus himself, and to begin only with the later and less important victories of Darius. And besides, these later conquests were mainly, if not entirely, eastward, the only direction not specified in the vision. Every reason, then, fixes the commencement of the prophecy to the time of Cyrus.

Now the conquests of Cyrus were in these directions ; first, Lydia westward, the first subject which Herodotus details at length ; next, Armenia and the tribes of northern Asia ; and then Babylon, which in the reign of his successor Cambyses was followed by the conquest of Egypt. The order and series of conquest was thus in full harmony with the prophetic description.

6. The words, "Arise, devour much flesh," imply the ravenous nature of the second empire. This seems to

refer mainly to that fiscal oppression which marked the Persian empire from the time of Darius Hystaspes and onward. Nearly thirty chapters of Herodotus are occupied with this one subject, the heavy tributes imposed by Darius on all the Asiatic nations.

7. The ram is said by the prophet to do according to his will, "so that no beast might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand." The words of Herodotus and Xenophon are in almost verbal agreement. The former tells us, that two motives urged Cyrus against the Massagetæ—'first, indeed, his birth, because it seemed to be more than human; and next, his prosperity in war; for *wherever Cyrus turned himself to march, it was impossible for that nation to escape.*' The same fact is stated more fully by Xenophon in the opening of the Cyropædia.

'But Cyrus, receiving the tribes of Asia in a similar state, under their own laws, and starting with a small army of Persians, ruled the Medes and the Hyrcanians by their own consent; and subverted the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygias, the Lydians, Carians, Phœnicians, Babylonians; and ruled also over the Bactrians, and Indians, and Cilicians: in like manner over the Sacæ, and Paphlagonians, and Mariandyni, and many other tribes, whose very names one can scarcely mention. And he ruled also over the Greeks in Asia, having come to the sea-coast, and over the Cyprians and Egyptians. He reigned, therefore, over these nations, which were neither of the same language with himself nor with each other; and yet he was able to range over so great a territory by the fear he inspired, so that he struck all with dread, and none assailed him; and was able to infuse such a desire into the minds of all men to obtain his favour, that they consented continually to be ruled by his judgment. And he subverted so many tribes as it is troublesome to recount, in whatever direction we start from the royal palace, to the east and west, north and south.'

8. The leopard is a natural emblem of the Greek em-

pire, especially under its great conqueror, Alexander. In the words of Theodoret, 'The prophet has very fitly compared Alexander to the leopard, for swiftness, speed, and variableness. And he assigns to the beast the four wings of a fowl; because when Alexander, with the swiftness of a bird, had overrun the four parts of the world, he reduced them under his own power.' The spotted hide of the leopard may also denote the various and motley tribes of Greece, and the outward grace and elegance of Grecian civilization.

9. The four heads of the leopard have been generally referred to four kingdoms formed by Alexander's successors. These are clearly denoted by the horns of the he-goat: and, notwithstanding all the minute objections which have been urged, the history fully answers to this prediction of a fourfold division.

It admits, however, of considerable doubt, whether the meaning of the four heads be really the same as that of the four horns. There are two reasons which may be alleged against it. These heads are named before the dominion is said to be given to the leopard. Perhaps this implies that they were in existence before the Asiatic conquests of Alexander. Also the seven heads in the Apocalypse are clearly successive in time, and each denotes a total, not a partial rule. If these reasons are of weight, the four heads will rather denote four successive headships of the third empire.

On this view, no less than on the other, history yields an exact solution. The invasion of Xerxes is marked in the prophecy itself as the crisis of Persian decay, and the commencement of Grecian superiority. From that time four distinct powers, in succession, prevailed in Greece. The Athenian empire first lasted seventy-two years. A.C. 477—405. It was succeeded by the Lacedemonian, to which Demosthenes and Diodorus assign twenty-nine or thirty years, A.C. 405—376, closing with the sea-fight of Naxos. Then followed the Theban ἀρίστεια or supremacy, of ten years, A.C. 371—362; and, two years afterwards, the accession of Philip and the commence-

ment of the power of Macedon. The broad features of the history would thus accord with the present emblem, while the four horns of the he-goat prefigure the divisions of Alexander's empire.

On the other hand, if we retain the more usual view, the four heads may be specified in order to show that Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, though not the proper seat of any of the four empires, are still reckoned along with Greece in the body of the Third Empire only.

9. The correspondence is self-evident between the great horn of the he-goat and the history of Alexander. The fourfold division of the Macedonian empire after the battle of Ipsus, answers, with equal exactness, to the words of the prophecy. The belly and thighs of brass have also a peculiar suitableness to denote the Greek empire. For brass is the frequent symbol of eloquence, in which the Greeks surpassed all other nations. It lent also their distinctive title to the Greeks in their own poets, as the brazen-mailed Achæans. And the two kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and the Lagidæ, or of Syria and Egypt, which were in such close connexion with the Jewish nation, seem also to be implied by this twofold emblem.

II. It will be sufficient, now, to give a brief outline of the chronology of these empires, so as to mark the triple coincidence of the prophecy, the sacred history, and heathen authors.

The dates of the Persian, Macedonian, and Egyptian kings are the following, as deduced from the Canon :—

PERSIAN KINGS.

			A. C.
Cyrus 9	A.N. 210	A.C. Jan. 5,	538
Cambyses 8	... 219	... Jan. 3,	529
Darius I. Hystaspes 36	.. 227	... Jan. 1,	521
Xerxes 21	... 263	... Dec. 23,	486
Artaxerxes I. Longimanus 41	284	... Dec. 17,	465
Darius II. Nothus 19	... 325	... Dec. 7,	424

Artaxerxes II. Mnemon 46	... 344	... Dec. 2,	405
Ochus 21	... 390	... Nov. 21,	359
Arogus or Arses 2	... 411	... Nov. 16,	338
Darius III. Codomannus 4	... 413	... Nov. 15,	336

KINGS OF THE GREEKS.

Alexander 8	... 417	... Nov. 14,	332
Philippus Aridæus 7	... 425	... Nov. 12,	324
Alexander Ægus 12	... 432	... Nov. 10,	317

These technical dates are slightly modified when we fix the true accession by the light of other histories. Those of Darius and Xerxes seem nearly to correspond with the date of the Canon, at the beginning of the Egyptian and Julian year. The actual reign of Xerxes was twenty years and five months. On his death, about June, A. C. 465, Artabanus succeeded for seven months, and the reign of Artaxerxes begun about Jan. 464. The short reign of Xerxes II., two months, and Sogdianus, seven months, completed the forty-one years of Artaxerxes. The death of that king seems to have been about Dec. 425, and the actual accession of Darius Nothus about the time of its date in the Canon.

It will now be easy to compare this record with the events of the sacred history. The Canon places the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, A. C. 538. But the book of Daniel makes Darius the Mede the next successor. Two years assigned to him complete the period of the captivity, seventy years. Accordingly Xenophon estimates the sole reign of Cyrus at seven years. In his first year according to Scripture, or the third in the Canon, the decree was issued which is twice recorded, at the close of Chronicles and the beginning of Ezra, the first main era of the deliverance from Babylon. In the seventh month of that year, the feast of Tabernacles was celebrated anew, (Oct. 536,) and in the second month of the following year, (May 535,) the work of the temple was begun. In the third year of Cyrus, his fifth in the Canon, Daniel received his latest vision, just seventy years

after the sole reign of Nebuchadnezzar began, and in the seventieth year from the first vision of the Great Image.

The work of the temple, after this, was hindered by the adversaries till the reign of Darius, in two intermediate reigns of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes. These will answer to Cambyses, and Smerdis his successor, whose reign, being less than a year, is not given in the Canon. This hindrance lasted until the second year of Darius. The decree, Ezra iv., will thus belong to the impostor, Smerdis; and this might be one concurrent reason for its entire reversal by Darius.

The actual accession of Darius Hystaspes appears to have been February or March A.C. 521. In Zechariah, however, it is clearly not reckoned from that date, but from the beginning of the then current or next succeeding Jewish year; and in this case it seems to be reckened from the latter, as the current year was so nearly ended. The first of Darius would therefore commence, April A. C. 521; and in his second year the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah began; and with them, the rebuilding of the temple.

The first message of Haggai will thus have been given about September A.C. 520; just seventy years from the beginning of that sabbatic rest which the Jews violated, with foul perjury, before the siege of Jerusalem; and which had been the immediate occasion of God's righteous judgment.

The first message to Zechariah, in like manner, would be Nov. A. C. 520. At the close of the eleventh month, Feb. A. C. 519, just seventy years from the commencement of the siege, the voice of the angel is heard, deploring the long captivity, "How long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?" The series of visions recorded in the six first chapters, answer to the interval of time occupied by the siege. In the ninth month of the fourth year, Dec. A. C. 518, the inquiry is made of the prophet con-

cerning the fasts, which had been celebrated in the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months; in memory of the capture of the city, the burning of the temple; the murder of the surviving remnant; and perhaps, of the tidings arriving among the exiles. (Jer. lii. 12; xli. Ezek. xxxiii. 21.) The message would therefore be seventy years, within one month, from the latest of those annual fasts; and would thus be a natural occasion to inquire whether they were to be renewed. Accordingly the promise was given, "The fasts of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah, joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace."

With this joyful strain of hope and promise the captivity of Babylon was closed; and, soon after, the temple was dedicated, and the Passover kept with peculiar solemnity and gladness.

In the first day of the first month, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, the commission was given to Ezra after an interval of near sixty years. That monarch's reign seems to have begun about Dec. A. C. 465. Whether the accession were reckoned from its true date, or from the following April, the first month of the seventh year would be alike April A. C. 458. The year that followed will include all the remaining events in the book of Ezra.

The history of Nehemiah begins in Chisleu or the ninth month of the twentieth year. But in the first month, still in the twentieth year, he received his commission. Hence the years of the monarch must here be reckoned from the Persian dates, and not from the beginning of the Jewish year. The accession also must have been not later than the ninth month, which nearly answers to December. But the nominal date of the accession, which precedes the true, is in the canon Dec. 17, A. C. 465. And hence the true accession would lie between Dec. 17, and the close of the Julian year; a result which exactly agrees with the

independent narrative of Thucydides, and with the conclusion drawn in the Fasti Hellenici from profane history. The commission will thus bear date April A.C. 445 ; and the last period distinctly specified in the Old Testament, the thirty-second of Artaxerxes, will answer to the Julian date, A.C. 433.

Here the sacred history ceases. But at this very point the chronology is continued by the well-known history of Thucydides ; as the following year was the first of the Polyponnesian war. Then that great struggle began in the third Empire, which issued soon after in the defeat of Athens, and the short supremacy of the Spartan power. Within a few years Thebes rose to eminence in its turn, and for a short period prevailed over Sparta, till its victories were closed at Leuctra by the death of Epaminondas. Soon after, Philip of Macedon began his career of successful ambition ; and, in spite of the eloquence of Demosthenes, broke the power of Athens, and gained the supremacy in Greece. At length Alexander, his son, burst like a torrent on the expiring monarchy of Persia, and the ram, once all-powerful, was trampled down by the fierce he-goat from the west.

This review of the Persian and Grecian history, as compared with the prophecy, might convey to us many lessons of spiritual instruction. But the truth which appears most solemnly and impressively revealed is the emptiness of mere human ambition in the sight of God. The period of these two empires, from Cyrus to the death of Alexander and to the reign of Antiochus, is that which is most celebrated in ancient history. Within its range are found the conquests of Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius, the wars of Greece, the expedition of Xerxes, the battles of Marathon, Thermopylae and Salamis, the names of Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, and Pericles, the struggles of Athens and Sparta, of Sparta and Thebes, the eloquence of Demosthenes, and the victories of Alexander. Arts and arms, taste and genius, conspire to make the era

memorable for ever in the eyes of men. And yet how briefly does the Spirit of God dismiss the whole narrative! A few verses are the space which it occupies in the word of God. Measured on the scale of eternity, and contrasted with the great facts on which the salvation of the world depends, this period of eloquence, genius, and refinement, shrinks away and shrivels into insignificance. The proudest exploits of worldly ambition, the victories of Themistocles or Alexander, come within the description of the holy apostle, by which he would impress on us the vanity of earthly things. However dazzling and splendid in the eyes of ambitious mortals, in the sight of heaven they are all of them "a vapour, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away."

CHAPTER V.

ON THE UNDIVIDED FOURTH EMPIRE.

A. C. 201.—A. D. 323.

DAN. II. 40.—"AND THE FOURTH KINGDOM SHALL BE STRONG AS IRON: FORASMUCH AS IRON BREAKETH IN PIECES AND SUBDUETH ALL THINGS: AND AS IRON THAT BREAKETH ALL THESE, SHALL IT BREAK IN PIECES AND BRUISE."

VII. 7.—"AFTER THIS I SAW IN THE NIGHT VISIONS, AND BEHOLD A FOURTH BEAST, DREADFUL AND TERRIBLE, AND STRONG EXCEEDINGLY; AND IT HAD GREAT IRON TEETH: IT DEVOURED AND BRAKE IN PIECES AND STAMPED THE RESIDUE WITH THE FEET OF IT: AND IT WAS DIVERSE FROM ALL THE BEASTS THAT WERE BEFORE IT; AND IT HAD TEN HORNS."

19.—"THEN I WOULD KNOW THE TRUTH OF THE FOURTH BEAST, WHICH WAS DIVERSE FROM ALL THE OTHERS, EXCEEDING DREADFUL, WHOSE TEETH WERE OF IRON, AND HIS NAILS OF BRASS; WHICH DEVOURED, BRAKE IN PIECES, AND STAMPED THE RESIDUE WITH HIS FEET."

23.—"THUS HE SAID, THE FOURTH BEAST SHALL BE THE FOURTH KINGDOM UPON EARTH, WHICH SHALL BE DIVERSE FROM ALL KINGDOMS, AND SHALL DEVOUR THE WHOLE EARTH, AND SHALL TREAD IT DOWN, AND BREAK IT IN PIECES."

IN the former part of these visions the Holy Spirit has briefly unfolded the history of the world, under the three empires of Babylon, Persia, and Macedon. These words continue the narrative within the times of the gospel, and under the fourth empire of Rome. They are the basis of all those prophecies which relate more especially to the Christian church. They claim therefore our most thoughtful attention, not so much to fix their general reference, which is soon determined, but to imbue our minds with those lessons of divine foreknow-

ledge and wisdom, which they convey ; and that we may duly apprehend the great outlines of God's holy providence in this lower world.

The fourth or iron kingdom, it has been proved already, denotes the empire of Rome. Every objection which has been brought against this universal conviction of the church, serves only, on examination, to confirm it the more. This empire, it is here taught us, was to exist in two different stages. In the first of these it would remain united, with a strength like that of iron ; and would devour the whole earth and break it in pieces. In the second it was to experience a tenfold division, and share in the weakness of miry clay. The most general review of the events of history shews their agreement with the prediction. And hence the verses above must include the unbroken power of Rome, from the days of Scipio, Sylla, and Pompey, to those of Constantine, or Valens.

The direct proof of this application of the sacred text is clear and simple. The nature of the emblem in the vision of the great image proves that the prophecy is continuous. The same truth is evident from the parts which have been clearly fulfilled, and from the gradual succession of the metals, from the gold to the iron and clay. Now the transition from the third to fourth empire is naturally placed at the time when the power of Macedon yielded to the ascendant of Rome, or about A. C. 197. And again, the close of the unbroken period of the empire cannot be later than the time of Valens, when the barbarians began their fatal inroads.

This interval of about six centuries is the natural object of the above predictions. And such accordingly is the view of their meaning which has prevailed from the earliest times. No early expositor ever confined these words to a few years of Roman history, excluding all the rest. With one consent they extend the prediction from Alexander's successors, at the latest, down to that fall of the Roman power which

was future in their days. The words of Jerome and Theodoret will answer for the others.

'But the fourth kingdom, which clearly relates to the Romans, is iron, which breaks in pieces and subdues all things. But its feet and toes are in part iron and in part clay; which is proved very plainly at this time. (A. D. 400.) For as in the beginning nothing was harder and stronger than the Roman empire, so in the end of things nothing is weaker.

The words of Theodoret are not less distinct.

'The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron.' He speaks of the Roman kingdom, which has been the strongest, and has exacted tribute and revenue from all. For he has used the term *break in pieces*, with this reference; and the word *subdue*, to denote obedience and order, and the regular administration of government.

So again, refuting the opinion of Porphyry, which referred the verse to Alexander's successors.

'But they ought to have noticed that, first of all, Daniel said that the head of gold was Nebuchadnezzar; that is, the kingdom of the Babylonians or Assyrians, to which that of the Persians and Medes succeeded at one and the same time; for Cyrus sprung from both. But this kingdom of the Persians, which came second, Alexander of Macedon demolished; whom the holy Daniel declares to have ruled over all the earth. This he calls the *third kingdom*, to which none but that of the Romans has succeeded. They ought, then, first from the number itself, and next from the events announced, to have understood and perceived that the third, namely the *brass*, was the Macedonian, and the fourth, namely the *iron*, the Roman. But if these things seemed more obscure to them, certainly from the issue they ought to have discerned the whole prediction.'

The peculiar importance of the events here described may be inferred from the repeated mention which they receive in the prophecy. We might conclude, from this alone, that the fourth empire was to have a close

and special connexion with the Church of God, and that the main outlines of its history would be found of the deepest interest to all the people of Christ. This is clearly true of the Roman empire. Its dominion is linked fast, in God's providence, with the great mystery of godliness, which to all eternity will fix the gaze of the adoring universe. It was a Roman governor before whom the Lord of heaven was arraigned in judgment. By Roman soldiers he was nailed to the cross. It was the spear of a Roman which pierced his side, and opened the sacrament of immortal life to the world. A Roman centurion, first among all the Gentiles, received the free message of salvation. The inspired history of the gospel and its triumphs ceases at the moment when St. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, has reached that imperial city. The facts, in every particular, correspond with this main feature of the sacred prophecy.

The meaning, then, of these verses is fixed and determined by a full combination of various evidence, internal and external. They relate to that memorable era when old Rome started on her wide career of victory, and became the mistress of the habitable globe. They contain, hid within their bosom, the first rise of the gospel, and all those mysteries of Providence which are grouped around the cross of our incarnate Lord and Saviour. Long before the proud city had emerged from the confines of Latium, the eternal Spirit surveyed, in the mirror of his own counsels, its future triumphs ; and here, by the lips of the prophet, He announces them both to the heathen monarch and to the whole Church of God. Let us draw near with reverence, and trace by the records of history the fulfilment of these true sayings of the Most High.

And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron. To enter fully into the meaning and force of these words, we must transport ourselves from Britain in the nineteenth century to the time of Daniel and the banks of the Euphrates. The plains of Hillah were not then, as now, bare and desolate. Babylon was in the height of

its power, the mistress of countless nations. Jerusalem the holy city, was in ruins, and the captive Jews were uttering their plaintive song—"By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps on the willows that were in the midst thereof." Daniel himself was a pensioner on the bounty of the king, and the prophecy arose from a dream in the royal palace.

How strange must the announcement appear at such a time, of an empire to arise among the unknown and barbarous tribes of the west, which should stretch its dominion to the walls of Babylon, and the banks of the Tigris! Asia had been for ages the seat of power, the mightiest and most populous region of the globe. Europe was buried in darkness, and its western tribes were like outcasts from the family of nations. Greece itself had scarce risen into notice, and presented only a confused multitude of feeble and jarring tribes. That an empire was then born among the barbarians of Latium, which would extend its power over Judea, Syria, and Babylon itself, was an event which no human wisdom could possibly divine. That this empire, like iron, should be endued with a political firmness beyond the mightiest monarchies of the east, was a prediction no less surprising, and would nowhere seem less credible than amidst the proud courtiers of Babylon. Two centuries later, Herodotus, in his various accounts of every region of the earth, and of innumerable towns and rivers, never once mentions the Tiber or the city of Rome. Yet here, amidst the splendour of Babylon, the prophet announces the rise and dominion of this fourth and greater empire. The most hidden causes, and changes the most unforeseen, lie open to the view of the All-seeing God. "He removeth kings and setteth up kings: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him." The secret springs of Roman greatness had all been marked and defined in his everlasting counsels. While the empires of the east were sinking into unsuspected decay, this mighty power

was nursing into strength amidst the gloomy shades of the west, which was soon to eclipse their greatness, by a wider extent of dominion, and a more enduring sway.

At the time of the vision, Rome, under the early kings, had scarce made any progress among the petty tribes of Latium and Etruria. Before the appointed time of its wider dominion, its advances were laborious and slow. Almost in the year of Babylon's fall, and while Cyrus was raising Persia to its height of power, Tarquin ascended the throne, and by his pride and tyranny threatened the ruin of his infant kingdom. The foundations of the republic were laid in weakness, while Darius and Xerxes marshalled all Asia under their haughty banners, and precipitated their countless host on the states of Greece. While Miltiades, Themistocles, Cimon, and Pericles, broke the strength of Persia, and with a band of poets and sages carried the glory of Athens to its height, Rome was convulsed with the factions of the senate and people, gasping under the tyranny of the decemvirs, struggling for existence with the Aequi, Volsci, and Veientians, and scarcely heard of beyond this narrow sphere of barbarian hostility. When Thebes arose suddenly to a brief dominion, and Philip usurped the control of Greece, and the Macedonians, under Alexander, broke the Persian monarchy, and overran the farthest countries of the east ; the future mistress of the world was sacked by the Gauls, and barely saved from extinction ; and continued to struggle with fierce and dangerous rivals within a hundred miles of her own walls. Even when the empire of Alexander was falling into decay, and the repulse of Pyrrhus had given Rome an earnest of her later triumphs, the rising energies of the state were repressed, and its reputation tarnished and obscured, by an enemy of superior fame, and a commander unrivalled in military skill. The triumphs of Hannibal in the second Punic war brought the city to the very brink of destruction. At length, when the latter time of the Macedonian kingdoms was come, and the crimes of Greece, Asia, and even of the

chosen people, had prepared them for the yoke, the battle of Zama sealed the doom of Carthage, and set free the power of Rome for its wide career of victory and dominion.

The era, then, of the fourth empire in these visions, may be dated from the first triumphs of Rome over Macedon. In the year A.C. 196, liberty was proclaimed to Greece by the Roman consul, at the Isthmian games. The boon was received by the degenerate Achæans with ignorant exultation and joy. That proclamation of liberty is the era from which we may date the bondage of the nations. From that time, by policy or by conquest, the republic subdued to itself all the mightiest kingdoms and monarchies of the earth.

The iron hardihood of the Romans had been signally proved in these Punic wars, which were brought to a close before their career of open victory. The following extracts will place the main course of events in a clear light.

'In the course of the war, which terminated in so distinguished a triumph, the victors had experienced much greater distress than had, even in the last stage of the conflict, fallen to the share of the vanquished. The greater part of the territory, during a series of years, lay waste, was ruined in its habitations, plundered of its slaves and cattle, and deserted by its people. The city itself was reduced to a scanty supply of provisions, that threatened immediate famine. Yet, proof against the whole of these sufferings, the Romans maintained the conflict with a resolution which seemed to imply, that they considered the smallest concession equivalent to ruin. In the further exertion of this *unconquerable spirit*, when the pressure of the war was removed, their fortunes rose to a flood of prosperity and greatness proportioned to the low ebb to which they seemed to have fallen.' (Ferg. Rep. i. p. 181.)

'They joined in Sicily, to their former possessions, Syracuse and the whole kingdom of Hiero. In Spain they succeeded to all the possessions, claims, and pretensions of Carthage, and became masters of all that

had been the subject of dispute in the war. They brought Carthage herself under contribution, and reduced her almost to the state of a province. On the side of Macedonia, in their treaty with Philip they retained to themselves considerable pledges, not only of security, but of power; and began to be considered in the councils of Greece as the principal arbiters of the fortune of nations. In Italy they were more absolute than before the war. . . . The Romans were altogether *men of the sword*, or of the State, and made no application to letters or sedentary occupations.'

Such was the aspect of the Roman power when it first entered on its course of Eastern conquest. Stubborn and firm as iron, and like iron, devoted supremely to the uses of war, it had no share with the brazen empire of Greece in the tinkling cymbals of ostentatious eloquence. War, clad in its iron armour, was their sole and chosen employment. Mars was their legendary parent, and the fierce she-wolf of Romulus, the fit emblem of their national fierceness. Even at this time their prophetic character had begun to appear; they were dreadful in prowess, "terrible and strong exceedingly," in the view of the surrounding nations.

But the iron kingdom forms a part of the great image, the glorious idol which dazzled the eyes of the heathen monarch. In the second vision it appears again, as a devouring wild beast of prey. In these two symbols are plainly implied the two kindred attributes of idolatrous worship and ambitious cruelty. These characters were both of them signally manifest in every successive age of this heathen empire. Amidst all the splendour of Roman virtue, and the iron strength and prowess of Roman warriors, cruelty and idolatry were found there, united in their perpetual and inseparable league. This truth appears with abundant evidence in the Latin historians. A few extracts from the work of Ferguson, and from Livy himself, will convey some impression of the mournful picture.

'To the simplicity of the Roman manners in other

respects, and to the ability of the councils of the state, was joined a very gross superstition, which led to many acts of absurdity and cruelty. . . . . A little before the late war, the senate, on the report of a prophecy, that the Gauls and the Greeks were to possess the city, ordered a man and a woman of each nation to be buried alive in the market-place ; supposing that by this act of monstrous cruelty, they were to fulfil or elude the prediction. They attended to the numberless prodigies that were annually collected, and to the charms that were suggested to avert the evils they presaged, no less than to the most serious affairs of the commonwealth. Fabius was no less celebrated for his diligence in averting the effect of prodigies and unhappy omens, than he was for the conduct and ability of a cautious and successful commander. Scipio is said to have pretended to special revelations.'

Let us now, by the aid of Livy, pursue the earlier steps of the Roman conquests. The war with Macedon broke out, B.C. 202. After a few years it was ended by the consul Flamininus in a signal victory. But the triumph of their arms was prefaced by an equal triumph of idol superstition. 'It was announced from Suessa, that two gates and the wall between them had been struck by lightning ; by the Formian legates, that the temple of Jupiter was struck ; the same by those of Ostium ; by the Veliternian, the temples of Apollo and Sancus, and that hair had grown in the temple of Hercules. Minutius the propraetor wrote from Bruttii, that a foal was born with five feet, and three chickens with three feet apiece. Sulpicius, the pro-consul, wrote from Macedon, that a laurel had grown from the poop of a ship of war. For the former prodigies the senate had decreed that the consuls should offer larger sacrifices to whatever gods they pleased. For this last, the augurs were called into the senate, and by their advice, a public prayer was announced for one day, and sacred rites were performed at all the shrines of the Gods.' Soon after, the decisive victory of Cynoscephalæ broke the power of Macedon

(B.C. 197). 'Most of the army laid down their arms and fled. The king, in a hurried flight, reached Tempe. There he stayed one day to receive those, if any, who had survived the battle. The victor Romans rushed into the enemy's camp, in the hope of prey, but found it mainly plundered by the Aetolians. Eight thousand of the enemy were slain, and five thousand were made prisoners. Philip retreated into Macedonia.' (Livy xxxiii. 10.) Peace was soon after granted on these conditions, 'That all the states of Greece, both in Europe and Asia, should be free; that Philip should resign all his decked ships except one royal vessel; that he should have only five hundred armed men, and no elephant. That he should wage no war out of Macedonia without leave from the senate, and pay a thousand talents to the Roman people.' (chap. xxx.) At the Isthmian games (B.C. 196), proclamation was made aloud by a herald. 'The Roman senate and people, and Titus Quinctius, the general, having vanquished King Philip and the Macedonians, proclaim freedom, immunity, and the use of their own laws, to the Corinthians, Phocians, and all the Locrians, the island Euboea, and the Magnesians, the Thessalians, Perrhœbi, and Achœans of Phthia.' In the following year, Nabis the tyrant of Lacedæmon was vanquished, and the power of the Romans silently confirmed. The war with Antiochus next ensued. The king was vanquished at Thermopylae, his army routed, and himself driven back into Asia. In the next campaign the Roman armies entered Asia for the first time (B.C. 190), and by a second victory at Myonnesus broke the Syrian power, which was now confined to the east of Mount Taurus. The Galatians were conquered in the following year, and the Cephallenians and Aetolians brought into subjection.

But the war with Perseus (B.C. 179) formed an era still more signal in the progress of Roman dominion. Livy remarks on it in these words (xli. c. 1.):—

'The Roman people had now carried their victorious arms through all parts of the world, and far and wide

had pervaded countries remotely distant, and separated by more than one sea. But in such extreme good fortune of propitious events, it had still gained the praise of moderation, and prevailed more by authority than dominion ; and boasted of effecting more among foreign nations by policy than by force and terror. Towards the conquered people and kings it was not severe ; it was munificent to its allies. Seeking for itself only the honours of victory, it had reserved to the kings their dignity, to the people their laws, rights, and liberty ; and thus, while its arms had reached on each shore of the Mediterranean from Gades even to Syria, and through immense regions reverence had been attracted to the Roman name, it had subject to its sway only the people of Sicily, and the islands about Italy, and most of Spain, which did not yet however bear the yoke with a willing neck. The cruelty of Perseus, who obtained the kingdom of Macedon by deceit, his avarice and inconsistency, ruined both himself, and whatever else could stand while this main check existed to the Roman power. For his fall spread to others, and brought on the ruin, not only of his neighbours, but of those who were far remote. Carthage and the Achaians followed the destruction of the Macedonians, and the state of all being shaken by their overthrow, the surviving kingdoms, suspected, for a time, and soon after subverted, all fell into the Roman empire.'

This war, like the others, was ushered in with the usual idolatries and superstitions. 'It was reported that at Saturnia it had rained blood for three days in the city ; that an ass with three feet was born at Calatia, and that a bull with five cows had been killed by one thunderbolt ; that at Oximus there had been a shower of earth. On account of these prodigies sacred rites were performed, and public prayers to the gods, and a feast held for one day.'

The speech of Perseus before the decisive conflict marks, in striking colours, the contrast between the time of the third and the fourth empire. 'Let them show

the like courage with their fathers, who, after subduing all Europe, passed over into Asia, and by their arms disclosed a world unknown even to fame; and did not cease to conquer, till space for conquests failed them, shut in by the Indian sea. But now fortune has announced a conflict, not for the remotest shores of India, but for the possession of Macedonia itself. The Romans, when they waged war with his father, used the specious pretext of restoring freedom to Greece. Now, they sought openly to enslave Macedonia, that no king might border on the Roman power, and no warlike nation retain the use of arms.'

The battle of Pydna soon followed (B. C. 168.) 'The Romans agreed that so many Macedonians were never slain in one battle. About twenty thousand fell; six thousand, who had fled to Pydna, were made prisoners, and five thousand was captured in the flight. Of the conquerors not more than a hundred were slain.'

The conquerors divided Macedon into four parts, of which Amphipolis, Thessalonica, Pella, and Pelagonia, were to be the chief towns, and Edessa, and *Berœa*, assigned to the third division. These provinces were forbidden to intermarry, or have any commerce with each other, out of their own bounds.' Thus were the words of the vision fulfilled, that the fourth kingdom, like iron, should break in pieces and bruise the strongest and mightiest empires.

'Not long after the fall of Macedon, Carthage was finally destroyed. The city continued to burn during seventeen days. The tidings were received at Rome with uncommon demonstrations of joy. The victors gave orders to raze the fortifications, and even to destroy the materials of which they were built. And thus Carthage, the model of magnificence, the repository of wealth, and one of the principal states of the ancient world, was no more. By the milder law and practice of modern nations, we are happily exempted from the danger of seeing such horrid examples repeated, at least in any part of the western world.'

Macedonia had been cast by the Romans into a republican form. 'To ensure its reception, they ordered all the ancient nobles and retainers of the court to depart from the kingdom, and to choose places of residence for themselves in Italy. A like plan was followed with respect to Illyricum, which was divided into three districts, and the kings both of this country and Macedonia were conducted to Rome, to adorn the triumph of their conquerors.' (Ferg. Book i. c. 7.)

But this arrangement lasted only a few years. 'Macedonia, being ill-fitted to retain the republican form, after some years of distraction, underwent a second conquest. The usurpation of Andriscus, . . furnished the Romans with an obvious pretence for reducing it to the ordinary form of a province. . . . The states of the Achaean league, already on the decline, hastened by their temerity the career of their fortunes to the same termination. . . As the Achaean league was dissolved on having incurred the resentment of the Romans, so the unhappy remnant of the Spartan republic perished by accepting their protection. The enmity and friendship of the Romans being equally fatal, these and every other state of Greece, from this time, ceased to be numbered among nations, having fallen a prey to a power, whose force nothing could equal, but the ability and cunning with which it was exerted. . . . This people, when they meant to ingratiate themselves, surpassed every other state in generosity to their allies; they gained entire confidence, and taught nations who were otherwise in a condition to maintain their own independence, to rely on that very power from which they had most to fear for their liberties; and in the end, under some pretence of ingratitude or affront, stripped of every right those states which had most plentifully shared in their bounty.'

Thus, in the same year that Carthage fell, it fared with Corinth also. Memmius 'gave up the town, abounding in all the ornaments of a wealthy metropolis, to be plundered by the soldiers. He razed the walls and re-

duced the city to ashes. . . The fortifications of Thebes were demolished, the Achaean league was dissolved, and all its conventions annulled. . . . The Romans now appeared openly in the capacity of conquerors. The acquisition of revenue in Macedonia, which first taught them to exempt themselves from taxation, excited thenceforward *an insatiable thirst of dominion*, and their future progress is marked by the detail of wars which they maintained on their frontier, not in defence of the empire, but for the enlargement of possessions already too great.'

Soon after the battle of Pydna and the fall of Perseus, the Jews first came in contact with the Roman power. It is deeply instructive to mark the contrast between the first occasion and the final close of their intercourse. The narrative is found in 1 Maccabees xii. (A. D. 161.)

"Now Judas had heard of the fame of the Romans, that they were mighty and valiant men, and such as would lovingly accept all that joined themselves unto them, and make a league of amity with all that came unto them; and that they were men of great valour. It was told him also of their wars and noble acts that they had done among the Galatians, and how they had conquered them, and brought them under tribute; and what they had done in the country of Spain, for the winning the mines of the silver and gold which are there; and that by their policy and patience they had conquered all the place, though it was very far from them; and the kings also that came against them from the uttermost part of the earth, till they had discomfited them, and given them a great overthrow, so that the rest did give them tribute every year; besides this how they had discomfited in battle Philip and Perseus kings of the Chittims, with others that lifted themselves up against them, and had overcome them; how also Antiochus the Great, king of Asia, that came against them in battle, having a hundred and twenty elephants, with horsemen and chariots, and a very great army,

was discomfited by them ; and how they took him alive, and covenanted that he and such as reigned after him should pay a great tribute, and give hostages ; and the country of India and Media and Lydia, and the goodliest countries, which they took of him and gave to king Eumenes ; moreover, how the Grecians had determined to come and destroy them ; and that they having knowledge thereof, sent a captain against them, and fighting with them slew many of them, and carried away captives their wives and their children, and spoiled them, and took possession of their lands, and pulled down their strongholds, and brought them to be their servants unto this day.

" It was told besides, how they destroyed and brought under their dominion all other kingdoms and isles that at any time resisted them ; but with their friends and such as relied on them they kept amity ; and that they had conquered kingdoms both far and nigh, insomuch that all who heard of their name were afraid of them : also that whom they would help to a kingdom, those reign ; and whom again they would, they displace ; finally, that they were greatly exalted : yet for all this, none of them wore a crown or was clothed in purple, to be magnified thereby ; moreover how they had made for themselves a senate-house, wherein three hundred and twenty men sat in council daily, consulting always for the people ; and that they committed their government to one man every year, who ruled over all their country, and that all were obedient to that one, and that there was neither envy nor emulation among them.

" On these accounts Judas choose Eupolemus the son of John, and Jason the son of Eleazer, and sent them to Rome, to make a league of amity and confederacy with them ; and to intreat them that they would take the yoke from them ; for they saw that the kingdom of the Grecians did oppress Israel with servitude. They went therefore to Rome, which was a very great journey, and came into the senate and said—Judas Maccabeus with his brethren, and the people of the Jews, have sent us unto you.

to make a confederacy and peace with you, and that we might be registered your confederates and friends."

Such was the first connexion between Judea and the Romans. When the Jews, by the advice of their valiant leader, began thus "to stay on him that would smite them," how little did they suspect the issue of the covenant, or foresee the distress and misery announced in these sacred visions as to come upon them through the armies of this courted and chosen power. The true knowledge of the word of prophecy, even to nations, is a surer defence and safer guide than the mere human prudence of the wisest and most valiant leaders. A parallel, perhaps, to this covenant of the renowned and prudent Maccabee, might be found in the recent history of our own land. The fruits of the Jewish covenant with *heathen* Rome did not however reveal themselves for near a century, when the most holy place was profaned, and the people subdued.

Spain was the next theatre of conquest. (A. C. 146—133.) 'After the defeat of Perseus, the ambition of the Romans seems to have operated there with the same effect, as in other parts, on the boundary of the empire. They pressed on the natives, not merely to secure their own territory, but to gain new accessions of dominion and wealth. . . . . In these wars the Roman officers were urged by their avarice as well as their ambition, and were glad of an occasion to quarrel with an enemy, where mines of gold and silver were known to abound. . . . To hasten their conquests they ventured on acts of treachery and breach of faith with the cantons around them. . . . The proconsul Lentulus, having accepted the surrender of a town, and being received into it by a capitulation, put the inhabitants to the sword, and carried off their goods. Galba soon after, in Lusitania, by a like act of perfidy and cruelty, circumvented some of the inhabitants whom he could not otherwise reduce.'

Viriathus escaped from one of these massacres, and bore an implacable resentment to its authors. 'He con-

tinued above ten years to baffle all the attempts of the Romans to reduce Lusitania. He had projected a league and confederacy with the other free nations of Spain, when he was assassinated, while asleep on the ground, by two of his followers, supposed to be in concert with the Roman general. The Romans, upon this event, found the western and northern parts of Spain open to their inroads. An army passed the Douro, and penetrated quite to the coast of Galicia.'

The fate of the Numantians illustrates the devouring fierceness of the iron kingdom. Pressed with famine, they appealed to the compassion of Scipio. 'What was once a happy state,' they said, 'content with its own possessions, and secure in the value of its citizens, is now brought to great distress, for no other crime than having maintained their freedom, and defended their wives and children.' The embassy was rejected. 'They held out until they had consumed every article of provision, devoured the dead bodies, and even preyed on each other. The end of this piteous scene is variously reported. By some it is said, that in the last stage of their despair, the Numantians sallied out to purchase death by the slaughter of their enemies; that they exposed themselves with the most frantic rage, till the greater part being slain, a few returned, set fire to the houses, and with their wives and children, perished in the flames.'

While these cruel sacrifices were making to Roman ambition in the west, the empire continued to enlarge in other quarters. The year that Numantia fell, (A. C. 133,) the kingdom of Pergamus was left as a legacy to the senate. Soon after, (A. C. 121,) the south of Gaul was reduced to the form of a province. The war with Jugurtha, presently followed, (A. C. 111,) and led to the conquest of Numidia, (A.C. 106.) Ten years later, Cyrene was erected into a province. Bithynia was inherited from Nicomedes, and Cappadocia declared independent. The war with Mithridates followed, and, after a severe struggle of twenty-two years, led to his

final overthrow. About the same time, (A. C. 66.) Crete and Cilicia were reduced ; Bithynia, Pontus, and Cappadocia, finally joined to the empire. Egypt ceded by Ptolemy as a legacy ; and two years later, Syria itself became a province of Rome. The conquest of Gaul soon followed, and the first invasion of Britain ; and when the civil wars had left Octavius the sole possessor of empire, the monarchy had reached the summit of dominion and greatness.

The course which led to these wonderful triumphs has been justly explained in these words, which illustrate the description in the prophecy. 'By the famous maxim of the Romans, that the submissive were to be spared, and the proud to be humbled, it became necessary for them, in every quarrel, to conquer or to perish : and when these were the alternatives proposed by them, other nations were entitled to consider them as common enemies. No state has a right to make the submission of mankind a necessary condition of their own preservation.' By the adoption, however, of this proud maxim, they were led on from one stage of power to another, till the whole earth was devoured and broken in pieces by their iron sway.

After the overthrow of Judea by Titus, the conquest of Britain and the victories of Trajan complete the long series of Roman triumphs. The complaints of the vanquished, as recorded by the Roman historian, and the summary of imperial greatness under Trajan and his successors which prefaces the 'Decline and Fall,' will throw light on the words of the prophecy, and complete the gloomy picture of irresistible power and devouring fierceness, in contrast with the hopeless bondage of the vanquished nations. And first we may listen to the complaints of the Britons.

'Patience avails us nothing, except that heavier burdens are imposed, from their confidence that we shall readily endure them. Formerly we had one king set over us ; now two are imposed at once ; our lives are subject to the fury of the legate, our goods to that of the

procurator. The concord and discord of our rulers is alike fatal to us ; the bands of the one, the centurions of the other, mingle threats and violence. Nothing is now safe from their avarice, nothing reserved from their lust. In battle it was at least warriors that spoiled us ; but now slothful cowards plunder our houses, kidnap our children, enforce levies, as if forsooth we would die in any cause except that of our country : for how few soldiers have crossed the channel, if the Britons would count their own numbers ? On our side, country, and wives, and children, luxury and avarice on theirs, are the causes of the war.'

The speech of Galgagus to the Caledonians is still more expressive of the same truths, and sheds a clearer light on the words of the vision :

'But now there is no tribe beyond us, nothing but waves and rocks, and Romans still more hateful ; men whose pride you attempt in vain to escape by submission and quietness. These ravagers of the world, after all the earth has been too narrow for their devastations, ransack the sea also. If their enemy be rich, they are covetous ; if needy, ambitious. The east cannot satiate them, no more can the west. Unlike all others, they covet wealth and poverty with equal appetite. To plunder, to murder, to rob under false titles, they call *dominion ;* and where they make a dreary solitude, they call it *peace.*

'Nature has ordained that to every man his own children and kinsmen shall be most dear : these are carried off by levies, to be slaves in other lands. Our wives and sisters, if they escape their lust, as open enemies, are polluted under specious names, of *guests* and *friends.* Our goods and fortunes they require for tribute, our corn for their provision ; even our bodies and hands are worn down, with stripes and insult, to fortify marshes and forests. Slaves born in slavery are bought once for all, and then sustained by their masters ; Britain daily buys her own slavery, and daily feeds it. And as in a servile household, the last comer is a jest to

his fellow slaves ; so in this long enslaved family of the whole world, we, as the latest comers and therefore despised, are hunted out for destruction.'

The victories of Trajan brought the power of Rome to its height, and along with that power the vassalage of the nations. 'The praises of Alexander, transmitted by a succession of poets and historians, had kindled a dangerous emulation in his mind. The degenerate Parthians fled before his arms. He descended the river Tigris in triumph, from the mountains of Armenia to the Persian gulf. His fleet ravaged the coasts of Arabia, and Trajan flattered himself that he was approaching towards the confines of India. Every day the astonished senate received the intelligence of new names and new nations that acknowledged his sway. They were informed that the kings of Bosphorus, Colchos, Iberia, Albania, and Osrhoëne, and even the Parthian monarch himself, had accepted their diadems from the hands of the emperor ; that the independent tribes of the Median and Carduchian hills had implored his protection ; and that the rich countries of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, were reduced into the state of provinces.'

After reviewing the wide extent of the empire, the historian resumes in these words :

'This long enumeration of provinces, whose broken fragments have formed so many powerful kingdoms, might almost induce us to forgive the vanity of the ancients. Dazzled with the extensive sway, the irresistible strength, and the real or affected moderation of the emperors, they permitted themselves to despise, and sometimes to forget, the outlying countries which had been left in the enjoyment of a barbarous independence ; and they gradually usurped the licence of confounding the Roman monarchy with the globe of the earth. . . . That empire was above two thousand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antonius and the northern limits of Dacia to Mount Atlas, and the tropic of Cancer. It extended, in length, more than three thousand miles from

the Western Ocean to the Euphrates. It was situated in the finest part of the temperate zone, between the twenty-fourth and fifty-sixth degrees of north latitude, and was supposed to contain above sixteen hundred thousand square miles, for the most part of fertile and well cultivated land.' 'The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the Ocean; and the image of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the IRON MONARCHY OF ROME.' (Gibb. c. I. xxxviii.)

Meanwhile the moral subjection and debasement of the Roman world, under the emperors, reached its height also. 'A modern tyrant, who should find no resistance in his own breast or in his people, would soon experience a gentle restraint from the example of his equals, the dread of censure, the advice of his allies, and the apprehension of his enemies. The object of his displeasure, escaping the narrow limits of his dominion, would easily obtain, in a happier climate, a secure refuge, the freedom of complaint, and perhaps the means of revenge. But THE EMPIRE OF THE ROMANS FILLED THE WORLD, and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of imperial despotism, whether condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus, or the frozen bank of the Danube, expected his fate in silent despair. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers he could discover nothing except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, and hostile tribes of fierce barbarians.'

Thus manifestly was the prediction fulfilled, that the fourth kingdom should "devour the whole earth, tread

it down, and break it in pieces." The world became a dreary prison for its enemies. To resist was fatal; it was impossible to fly. Every feature of the vision meets its full counterpart in the history of imperial Rome. Let us now gather some of those doctrinal and practical lessons which the present verse is so well fitted to convey.

And first, the words are a solemn testimony to the vastness of the Divine foreknowledge. Even apart from such predictions, reason and Scripture alike reveal to us that foreseeing wisdom must be one of the perfections of the Most High. The Maker and Lord of all cannot but know and foresee the actions and the thoughts of all the creatures he has made. Or if the voice of reason were doubtful, the word of God proclaims the truth by prophets and apostles, that "known unto God are all His works from the beginning," and that "He ordereth all things by the counsel of His own will." But there is a wide difference between this abstract admission of a doctrine, and the deep, living conviction of its reality, which carries it into the secret chambers of the soul, and applies it to all the immense variety of human affairs. The prescience of God, like His omnipresence, when viewed in its absolute grandeur, is "too wonderful for us: it is high, we cannot attain unto it." But a prediction like this, compared with the fact of its fulfilment, brings down the truth into the region of time and sense, and enables us to rise into a surer and fuller perception of its immeasurable glory. To reap the benefit, however, of this revelation, we must not gaze on the truth from without, and at a distance. It is a first stage of thought to gain an assurance of the true reference of the prophecy. But there is a second stage, attended with far nobler fruits of Divine wisdom. We must draw near with reverence and faith, place ourselves by the side of the prophet, and contemplate the whole scene which history has since unveiled to us in the light of this celestial revelation.

While Rome, then, was struggling in its infant weak-

ness, and the banks of the Tiber were unknown to fame, an exile was transported from the ruins of David's city and Solomon's temple to the palace of ancient Babylon. There a mysterious vision, from God's own Spirit, disturbs the slumbers of the king. Amidst all the splendours of his court, a gleam from a coming eternity is let in upon his soul. The wisdom of his astrologers and counsellors fails to remove the mystery. But the same Spirit who sends the vision to the monarch, reveals both the dream and the interpretation to his own servant. From the banks of that unknown river, a petty and barbarian town was to rise into a mighty empire, to crush the oldest monarchies into the dust, and rule with an iron sceptre over a subject universe.

Now let us dwell thoughtfully on this brief prediction, and how does it open itself into an overwhelming vastness! At the time when Daniel stood before Nebuchadnezzar, and proclaimed the truth—"there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets"—that truth was receiving its most sublime illustration. These few words are a pledge to us that the whole course of Roman triumph and imperial splendour lay under the clear gaze of the revealing Spirit. Each future province of the mighty empire, every painful and laborious step in its progress to supreme dominion, was open to his view. The storms which rocked the cradle of Rome, and nursed it into greatness; the wars of Carthage, the victories of Hannibal, the proud triumphs of Scipio and Paullus, of Marius and Sylla, of Pompey and Cæsar; the fall of Greece, and Syria, and Egypt; of Spain, and Gaul, and Britain, with all the fierce convulsions of intestine strife, and the imperial line of Cæsar, were all, even then, planned out and clearly forseen in the counsels of the Most High. Where a worldly mind sees nothing but a wild sea of human passions, or the dark working of subtle policy and ambition, these words reveal a mightier Presence, standing in the midst of those proud statesmen and warriors, though they knew Him not. A flood of heaven's light here streams down upon

the darkest page of Roman ambition and crime. Amidst those gloomy scenes of triumphant injustice, foul idolatry, or superstitious pride, Almighty Power was there to control, Omniscient Wisdom to foresee and to ordain; and love and holiness were overruling the mighty drama of strife and violence, to accomplish their own hidden counsel of grace and redemption to a fallen world.

The Christian, then, ought to carry this verse, as a bright lamp of heaven, into each dark corner of heathen history. All will then grow bright to his view with manifest tokens of the divine presence. Whether he turns to that early age of Rome, half lost in fictions that have wearied the researches of modern learning, or to those wars of later times which have filled the world with their fame; whether he dwells on the eloquence of Cicero, the poetry of Virgil, or the triumphs of Cæsar, or the records, in Tacitus and Juvenal, of impartial crime; he may renew over them all the song of the inspired prophet, and sanctify with its sacred melody the gloomy landscape of idolatrous ambition. "Blessed be the name of God for ever, for wisdom and might are his. He removeth kings and setteth up kings. He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him."

A further lesson to be gained from this verse, is the surprising fulness and depth of the word of God. What is the truth which this short sentence reveals to us? The history of the world through five hundred years. The destiny of hundreds of millions of mankind. As Moses, from the top of Pisgah, beheld at one view the land of promise, from Zoar to Lebanon, from Gilead to the Western Sea; so do we here gaze on the wide landscape of God's providence, as it stood pourtrayed in His secret counsel. We track the course of Rome's history, from the time when it was a feeble city on the verge of ruin, till it towered, like the cedars of Lebanon, over the subject nations. From the German forests to the Lybian deserts, from the banks of the Euphrates to the wall of Antonine and the Western

Ocean, Europe, Asia, and Africa are blended in one magnificent scene, over which the word of God presides in majesty, and proclaims, in one brief sentence, its destiny for ages. Not more surely does the acorn expand into the majestic oak, than this living prophecy contains in it the germ of all the Roman greatness. When the Gauls came down upon the rising city, and almost sunk it in total ruin, a mightier power than the sword of Camillus turned the scale of victory. The sure and unfailing word of prophecy, which might not be broken, upbore the sinking state, and the Capitol emerged from the flood of barbarism to rule over a prostrate world. In each later struggle with Pyrrhus or Hannibal, with Philip or Antiochus, with Mithridates in the east, or the fierce barbarians of the west, far other powers were at work than the blind caprice of fortune, or the fancied protection of Capitoline Jove. The living God had spoken, and His word could not fail. It was written in 'the scripture of truth,' that the kingdom now rising on the banks of Tiber, should devour the whole earth and break it in pieces. Who indeed can read the many hair-breadth escapes of Rome, the mighty enemies from abroad, the deadly feuds at home, and not feel that something more than the subtlety of its senators, or the valour of its soldiers, is needed to explain its unbroken career of triumph? Yes, doubtless, the true secret is to be found in this passage alone. 'The arms of the republic, sometimes defeated in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the Ocean.' Why always victorious, except because the 'iron monarchy of Rome' had been announced as the vanquisher of the earth? Why, but to confirm the great lesson taught to the king of Babylon, "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will?"

But if this one verse of prophecy has so vast a range, and embraces so wide a scene, we are reminded of other truths, as brief in their expression, and as vast and deep

in their meaning, which apply to the same events. "God will bring every work into judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." This truth, like the former, spreads over the whole range of classic history. The Christian is to apply it, just as this short prophecy applies to the whole course of events, from the birth of Rome, or the wars of Macedon, down to the close of the heathen empire. Those antiquities, so obscure and impenetrable to human learning, are all recorded in the archives of heaven. The kings and pontiffs, the consuls and dictators, the tribunes, and orators, and poets, who meet us in the page of Roman history, the proud idolaters who sacrificed their lives on the altar of ambition; the profligates who wrung out the life-blood of the plundered provinces, and the scanty remnant who, in the thick darkness, were "feeling after God if haply they might find him"—all are awaiting a judgment still to come; and every public crime which has been covered with the blaze of victory and triumph, is to receive a righteous verdict from the lips of the supreme Judge. How should this teach us the emptiness of human censure or human praise! How should we learn to read the history of Roman triumph with reverence and fear, not daring to applaud those splendid iniquities, which will soon be denounced, in His righteous anger, by the Ruler of the nations!

And as the warning of judgment to come, so also the message of divine grace, extends throughout the whole range of these predicted changes. "The Lord is good to every man; his tender mercies are over all his works." "He willeth not the death of a sinner, but that he should turn and live." "God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." These statements of the divine mercy need also to be linked with this brief prophecy, and to attend it in every stage of its long fulfilment. While this one verse reveals to us the whole theatre of Roman power and greatness through five hundred years, we are to remember that these brief declarations of God's love are equally

wide and various in their application. There was love resting on the heathen world amidst its ambition and idolatry, and crime. There was a light ever shining in the darkness, and seeking to pierce to the hearts and consciences of those idolaters, whose god was ambition, whose offerings the tears of captives and the blood of slaughtered enemies. The crimes of Tarquin, the seditions of the people, the deceits of the senate, the ambition of conquering chiefs, the licentiousness of sensual poets, the abominations of the pagan emperors, the pride and idolatry of the whole nation, are here summed up in one short prediction of God's word; and in one other verse of the same word the divine remedy is proclaimed, more wide and deep than all the depths of Roman wickedness. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

From lessons of a more general nature we may pass on to those which are taught us by the details of the vision. The whole series of empires are here presented to us under the form of one bright and glorious image. They are revealed to the heathen monarch in terrible brightness, but afterwards, to the holy prophet, as devouring beasts of the earth. The contrast is most instructive, and unfolds to us the true character of Roman history.

Our estimate of every course of human action must vary, according to the standard of wisdom or duty that we assume. The things which are highly esteemed among men, are often abomination before God. And He who, in the sight of heaven, was fairer than the children of men, had no form or comeliness in the view of fallen sinners. There is a spiritual discernment which is needful, before the actions of men or empires can be seen in their true colours. Nebuchadnezzar was a heathen king, and now in the height of triumphant ambition. Worldly greatness was his idol. And therefore an

image which embodied the whole of the world's grandeur for two thousand years, a visible sacrament of ambition, was clothed to his eyes with a dazzling and terrific splendour. What he admired, and feared, and almost adored himself, seemed to him the fit object of universal worship ; and the golden image set up on the plains of Dura was a sacramental form of that idolatry which reigns in the affections of all the children of the world. The will of the monarch, the splendour of the nobles, the example of the great and the wise, the brightness of gold, the harmony of choicest music, and the applause of consenting multitudes, were all combined, and who could resist the fascination? Amidst so enchanting a scene of worldly splendour, who could churlishly refuse to fall down and worship ?

Three witnesses, however, were found, blind to these charms of worldly glory, and faithful to their conscience and their God. How different would the whole scene appear to them ! The multitude, obsequious, and prepared to worship, would think nothing of the fiery furnace ; their ears would be filled with the sounds of harmony, and their eyes dazzled with the lofty image of gold. But to those faithful witnesses one object would be foremost in their thoughts amidst the sounds of revelry, the persecuting edict of the king, and the fiery furnace they were sentenced to endure. The glare of false splendour would cease to dazzle their eyes ; and where the crowd of worldlings saw only festal pomp and grandeur, they would see rebellion against God, and oppression of his true servants. Hence, after the experience of the fiery furnace and of the den of lions, when the same empires are once more revealed to the prophet, they are stripped of their dazzling brightness, and appear in the vision as wild beasts of the earth.

The truth to be learned from this contrast is simple and impressive. Heathen Rome has two different aspects in which it may be viewed. In the first it reveals itself to the disciples of expediency, the votaries of ambition, or the idolaters of outward splendour ; it is

seen in the other aspect by the blessed angels and the spirits of the just. Seen in the first, it has much to win the admiration of mankind ; persevering and able policy, noble works of art, triumphs of surpassing valour, and acts of generous self-devotion. So specious are these attractions, that some have even doubted whether the Roman power could be designed by the fourth beast. But the objection, on closer search, confirms the true application to Rome. The Fourth Empire, to the eye of the heathen king, was part of that image which dazzled him with its terrible brightness ; it was only to the aged prophet that it revealed its true features of cruelty and rapine.

And surely, however attractive to a worldly eye, to the enlightened Christian heathen Rome is a spectacle of shame and sorrow. Let us only take the law and the testimony for our guide, and the Divine example of the Son of God himself, and what contrast can be more complete ! Compare the history of Romulus or Brutus, of Coriolanus or Scipio, of Pompey or Cæsar, or the most honoured names of Rome, with that living example of true excellence, and the false glare of renown fades completely away. In its place there stands out in dark relief, the stubbornness of pride, the gloom of idolatrous superstition, and the foul taint of habitual ungodliness. When the pure Gospel of Christ came forth, and, like the spear of Ithuriel, tested the real character of Roman virtue, it manifested its true nature in persecution, hatred, and cruel murder of the servants of God. One purpose, no doubt, for which these two visions are given, is to lead our thoughts beyond the surface of history, and to mark the contrast between the false glare of worldly ambition, and the glory of true holiness in the world to come.

A further lesson taught us by this vision is, the downward course of mere earthly greatness. The dominion which, at first, was in the head of gold, passes on to the breast of silver, then to the thighs of brass, and the legs of irons, and last of all to the feet, where the

iron itself is mixed with the miry clay. By this strange emblem, the Spirit of God sets before us a lesson full of Divine wisdom. The infidel theories of human progress and perfectibility are here opposed by a deeper view, more humbling to man, but rich with more solid comfort ; since it removes our hopes from the sandy foundation of man's wisdom and virtue, and plants them on the rock of God's eternal covenant.

The truth here taught us is equally opposed to the vain hopes of the infidel, and to the gloomy unbelief which sees nothing in prospect for mankind but a vista of confusion, misery, and crime. Man may be viewed in two aspects, either as receiving or rejecting the word of God. Wherever the message of Divine mercy is heartily embraced, there is a promise not only of peace, but of continual progress. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." This promise is not confined to each separate Christian ; it extends to the whole church of God. From age to age the counsels of Divine love are more largely unfolded, and present the Church with a richer provision for her immortal repast. The body of Christ, knit together in love, receives a continual increase. Each successive age enters, therefore, into a larger inheritance of truth. The stream from God's sanctuary enlarges still as it flows, till it heals the dead sea of the fallen world, or discharges itself into the ocean of a blessed eternity.

Where the Gospel is rejected, there is a progress of an opposite kind. The longer the truth of heaven shines upon the heart, without a welcome, the more intense the moral darkness becomes. The conscience is seared and hardened. Religion sinks first into a round of mere forms, a lifeless ceremonial, and then is cast away. The high sense of honour, that shadow of departed holiness, is debased into a mercenary reckoning of private gain. The social affections, the hardiest relics of Paradise, are blighted and perish, amidst a chilling atmosphere of luxury and selfishness. At length the noble image of

original greatness which fallen man sometimes retains, is turned into the sensual debasement of the miry clay, where scoffers, like the swine, may revel in their own corruption.

The twofold progress of good and evil is checkered, it is true, and varied by many partial changes ; but will never cease till the corruptions of the world bring down the last judgments, and the church shines forth in the resurrection glory. The Christian rises more and more into sympathy and fellowship with the God of heaven. The unbeliever and the worldling travel farther and farther into the thick darkness which separates them from His presence. The votary of superstition is behind his age, as far as the days of the northern barbarians. The infidel, in the pride of science, has made a further progress, backward into the times of darkness : he belongs to the days of Sodom, or the generation before the flood. True progress belongs to the hopeful Christian, and to him alone. He only, in the true sense of the words, is before his age ; for he is dwelling, by faith and hope, in the ages to come, wherein righteousness and peace shall reign for ever.

The progress, however, directly revealed in this vision, is the downward progress of the world. When the power, indeed, has gone down even to the toes and the miry clay, then the fearful descent is arrested, and the stone which smites the Image, swells upward into a mountain toward heaven. But, until that great era of redemption, men who reject the light sink lower and deeper in earthliness. The Roman character had far less of high soaring and etherial thought than was found among the sages of Greece. Selfish ambition had impressed on it a grosser and fouler taint. On the abusers of the Gospel in modern times the curse lies still deeper. Those who reject the wedding garment of salvation, are sentenced to lose even those elements of natural greatness which appear in the chiefs and statesmen of ancient Rome. Apart from the true church of Christ, the philosophy of the last days will sink into

the very dregs of corruption. Coarse, heartless money-getting: gross and sensual pleasures, without the restraints of honour and shame, will complete the apostasy of the nations. And when the Roman selfishness of national pride is sunk into the worse degradation of mercenary avarice; and patriotism itself extinct in the lust of gain and pleasure, then the iron will have lost its cohesion, and be changed entirely into the miry clay; a mass of earthliness and corruption, that will call down the judgments of heaven.

These verses may also suggest to us a further lesson of deep and practical importance to the Christian. They show us the true proportion, in the sight of heaven, between the facts and truths of political science, and those of spiritual religion. There is a frequent error, among the most devoted Christians, by which they would dismiss the civil affairs of nations as profane, and quite unworthy of their regard. They would thus sink and merge the patriot in the mystic recluse. There is an opposite error, more frequent and more dangerous, which, in the intense interest of political strife, loses sight of eternal things, and thus quenches the life of true religion in the soul. The Spirit of God bears witness, in these visions, against both errors. The outward changes of human society, He here instructs us, may not be neglected, or despised. They are a part of the great scheme of Providence. They have a place in the revealed oracles of God. They are linked, by the closest union, with the destinies of the Church of Christ, and the spiritual welfare of immortal souls. They involve great duties, which the Christian, like Daniel, though perhaps in a lower sphere, is appointed to fulfil; while they open a large field of meditation on the ways of the Most High. The same Daniel, who was set over the province of Babylon, and sat in the gate of the king, was also the man greatly beloved, the prophet admitted nearest into the counsel of God, sitting in the gate of the King of heaven. The changes and victories of

heathen Rome find a place in these sacred visions. And thus we are taught that the outward events of political history are no unholy or forbidden ground. They are sanctified by the word of God and by prayer.

On the other hand, these words remind us how subordinate a place worldly changes occupy in the perspective of heaven. The proud landscape of five centuries of Roman greatness, stored in every part with wars and victories, and the gorgeous triumphs of power, is here compressed into two or three verses. The travels of one solitary patriarch, who owned himself a pilgrim on the earth, the sufferings of Joseph or the labours of Ezra, occupy a far larger space in the inspired word. The history of Edom and its dukes is shut up in one chapter of Genesis ; while that of Israel and his sons is carried on, like a stream of light, through all the successive books of Holy Scripture. Here we may see the true and divine proportion between the annals of the world and the history of the Church of God. Time is precious, from its connexion with eternity. All outward things, viewed aright, obtain dignity and importance only from their bearing on the great scheme of redemption. One ceremonial law, given to the despised race of Israel four thousand years ago, is thus of equal dignity, and deserves as full a place in the record, as the whole history of heathen Rome. Mere ambition terminates on itself. The triumphs of Rome were transient and perishable : the monuments of her glory have already crumbled into ruin. But every command of God, however trivial its object, partakes of His own eternity. While we gaze upon it, unsuspected and hidden truths are continually revealed to our view. What seemed, at first, trivial and unmeaning, deepens into a message of secret and mysterious wisdom, and becomes a channel of everlasting goodness to the immortal soul.

Seeing then that heathen Rome and its triumphs find a place in the sacred volume, we learn that every Christian, as the providence of God may allow, should

meditate freely on all the records of heathen antiquity, and the political events of later times. That Divine foreknowledge and controlling presence of God, which are here revealed, will give a hallowing power even to the historians and orators of Greece or Rome, and to all the spirit-stirring memorials of their departed greatness. But while we meditate on these things, there is a deeper lesson which must be kept in mind. All this vast and magnificent scene of human greatness must be seen in its true light, and own the superior excellence and dignity of the least of God's commandments. One verse of the sacred oracles bounds and circumscribes all these vaunted triumphs of Rome. And when the glory of all the world's kingdoms was gathered by Satan, the arch deceiver, into one dazzling enchantment, one verse of the same oracles could dash to pieces the whole pageant of temptation. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

The Christian, then, treading in the footsteps of his Lord and Master, is to aim at this high standard of spiritual judgment. He may be alive to the vastness of those mighty interests and stirring scenes which old Rome sets before us. But he must remember that there is a beauty and power in the least sentence of God's word, which outvies the grandeur of the imperial city, though kingdoms and continents were for ages subject to its sway. This true and Divine proportion between things earthly and things heavenly, once established in the soul, will prove a sure fortress against all the temptations of the world. All the fascinating allurements of pleasure, covetousness, and ambition, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, will then fade away before the power of one short sentence, which sums up the hope of the faithful Christian,—"A city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

CHAPTER VI.

THE FOURTH PROPHETIC EMPIRE.

FIRST STAGE OF DIVISION.

A. D. 323—476.

DAN. II. 41.—"AND WHEREAS THOU SAWEST THE FEET AND TOES, PART OF POTTER'S CLAY, AND PART OF IRON, THE KINGDOM SHALL BE DIVIDED; BUT THERE SHALL BE IN IT OF THE STRENGTH OF THE IRON, FORASMUCH AS THOU SAWEST THE IRON MIXED WITH MIRY CLAY."

THESE words reveal to us a later stage of the Fourth Empire, in which its unity is broken, and its strength greatly impaired. The course of history, in its natural order, points us at once to the period from Constantine to Augustulus, to which every feature of the description will apply.

This view, which the words suggest of themselves, is confirmed by the judgment of all the early writers. Thus Irenæus, at the close of the second century, speaks of the division as future, and the next event in prospect. 'St. John,' he says, 'in the Apocalypse, has spoken still more plainly of the last time, and of these ten kings, among whom *the kingdom that now reigns* shall be divided.' Jerome believed the division to have begun in his own day. 'But its feet and toes are in part iron and in part clay; which is very plainly confirmed at this time. For as in the beginning, nothing was stronger and harder than the Roman Empire, so in the end of things nothing is weaker; since both

in civil wars and against foreign nations we need the help of barbarian tribes.'

Sulpicius Severus, about the same time, (A.D. 401.) used similar language, 'The legs of iron are the fourth kingdom, and by that is meant the Roman, the strongest of all former kingdoms. But the feet, part of iron and part of clay, prefigure that the Roman Empire was to be divided, so that it may never combine into one. Which is equally fulfilled; since now the Roman affairs are administered, not by one emperor but by several, and these always at discord among themselves both in arms and interest. Finally, that the clay and iron, substances that never unite together, are mingled, denotes intermixtures of human race, mutually differing from each other. Since indeed it is clear that the Roman territory is either openly seized by rebellious tribes of barbarians, or surrendered to them by a show of peaceful compact: and we see that barbarous nations, especially Jews, are mingled with our armies, cities, and provinces, and live among us; and yet do not adopt our customs.'

The remarks of Theodoret are similar, though obscured by the Greek version he follows, which reads 'another divided kingdom.'

'He means *another*, not in race, but in the character of its strength. For if he had meant another in race, he would have called it a fifth, as before he named a third and a fourth. But because he knew the end of the iron kingdom would be weaker, he used the word *other* in reference to its weakness. For before he called it far the strongest, and such in truth was its beginning. But he affirms that even its last times will not be altogether feeble. The following words especially show that this is not a different kingdom from that of iron, but the same in a state of greater weakness; and part of it strong, and part feeble. Nevertheless the law of marriage will unite the feeble with the strong. For the phrase, they shall be mingled with the seed of men, makes this evident. There will be a certain intermix-

ture, he says, and intermarriage of these and those; but still discord will overturn the just claims of kindred; for this will not cleave, he says, to this, even as iron is not mixed with clay.'

'When the iron kingdom is brought into weakness, and has received the intermingling of the clay, then will appear the stone cut out without hands, and will break in pieces the clay, iron, brass, silver, and gold, and will remove them thoroughly, and bestow on them that are worthy an unchanging and eternal, and boundless kingdom.' . . . . Since then the former birth of our Lord did not destroy the Roman sovereignty, it remains that we must understand hereby His second appearing. He who is already the stone cut without hand, in His second coming will smite the image on its feet of clay; that is, He will appear in the very end of the iron kingdom, when it has already become feeble, and will destroy all these sovereignties, and consign them to oblivion, and give unto the worthy His own everlasting kingdom.'

In all these passages, the words of the vision are referred to the whole course of events from the fourth century to the future kingdom of Messiah. This interpretation is confirmed by every mark which the prophecy gives to fix its own meaning. The feet of iron and clay are joined in the symbol, without any interval, to the legs of iron, or the undivided Empire of Rome. The divided state also is described at three times greater length than the previous stage of the empire, which accords precisely with the actual proportion of time. And finally, the intermarriages here predicted imply naturally a space of several generations.

But the inquiry may arise, whether the three verses which relate to the division, may not themselves refer to successive periods of time. In so brief a sketch of the whole course of providence, no word or sentence can be inserted without distinct weight and meaning. Now in verses 41, 42, there is a clear gradation. The

first mentions the feet and toes, but the second the toes only. The verse which follows still refers to the toes of the image, but describes attempts at reunion. Every minute feature is thus favourable to the idea of their successive application; though the distinction is less prominent than between the undivided empire, and its later history in its divided form. The present verse will apply, then, to the earliest stage of division, when the unity of the empire had scarcely ceased; and hence the feet are included with the toes in the description. Such precisely was the state of the Roman Empire, from Valens to Augustulus. Let us now trace the details of the fulfilment.

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and the toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron." There is a striking symmetry in all the emblems of this vision. Our growing knowledge of the material world shows us still deeper resemblance in the figures which the Holy Spirit employs to reveal the mysteries of his own providence. The four metals of the image form a decreasing series, not only in their worth, but in their weight, and their atoms or chemical equivalents. The iron and the clay reveal to us another point of secret harmony between the emblem and its symbolic meaning. In external properties these two elements differ widely; but modern science has detected a hidden relation between them, by which iron and clay may replace each other, in most compounds, without change of external form. To this curious and hidden relation the emblem seems here to allude. In these two stages of the empire there would be superficial marks of strong contrast. But, as in the iron and the clay, there are also deeper relations of close resemblance which reveal themselves to the discerning eye. The mechanical properties differ widely; but the deeper moral affinities are close and strong between the history of Pagan and Papal Rome.

The division, in the present verse, arises, not from the separation of the toes, but the mingling of clay with the iron. Hence it denotes properly the loosened cohesion

of government throughout the empire, now in a state of rapid decline from its original greatness. It was to be patched with foreign and barbarous elements, before the complete separation into many kingdoms. Such, in every particular, are the facts which history reveals.

The two legs of iron have been sometimes referred to the eastern and western empires. On this ground, expositors have been charged with a great and careless error in seeking for ten kingdoms in the west only. The whole ten, it is said, have been given to one leg of the image, which was an inexcusable oversight. But in truth, the oversight belongs to such objectors themselves. The best expositors have deliberately weighed the question, and decided on the clearest grounds, as will be seen presently, that the kingdoms belong to the west only. On the other hand, the view assumed in the objection as self-evident is entirely baseless, and involves a contradiction. For since the third empire of Macedon and the eastern empire of Rome had the same bounds, it would follow that the thighs of brass are the same with one of the legs of iron.

The distinctness of the four empires, in their territory, is indeed almost equally plain with their succession in order of time. Each retains its own proper theatre, whether it rules over other states, or is subject in turn; else they could not be broken in pieces together.

It is true that the brazen thighs of the image have been referred, with apparent reason, to the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, which grew out of the Macedonian empire. But the analogy entirely fails. Those two kingdoms lay within the appropriate territory of the third empire. But the eastern empire of Rome lay entirely within the territory of Macedon or Greece. And besides, there is a further incongruity in supposing the thighs to refer to a northern and southern division, and the legs of iron to one in a direction entirely different. If a local division be at all implied, it can only distinguish the northern and southern parts of western Europe.

Let us now examine the facts of history, and see how far they are in agreement with the words of the vision.

The widest extent of the Roman empire was in the time of Trajan. All the world seemed then to sit still and be at rest under the shadow of the imperial city. Rome could then say in the pride of her heart,—"I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Thus Dionysius describes to us its power in the days of Augustus. 'The city of Rome rules over all the earth, as far as this is not impassable, but inhabited by men; and it commands all the sea, not only that within the pillars of Hercules, but also the ocean, as far as it admits of sailing. It is the first and only one from the beginning of time, which has made the rising and setting sun the limits of its power; and the time of its dominion is not short, but such as no other city or kingdom hath attained.'

This description continued to apply, with nearly the same degree of truth, from the days of Augustus to those of Diocletian and Constantine. Then ensued a mighty change, the effect of the martyrs' faithful sufferings. The empire ceased to be heathen, and bowed its haughty neck, in outward profession, to the yoke of Christ.

Had this conversion of Rome to the Christian faith been as deep and genuine as it was conspicuous to the eye, there might be strong reason to concur with those writers who would date from this event the kingdom of the mountain. But history and prophecy alike teach a very different lesson. The form of opposition to the truth was changed, but its strength and bitterness had scarcely suffered any abatement. The mystery of iniquity continued to work, even more busily and mightly than before. The falling away had yet to be completed, and the man of sin to appear. The coming of the Lord, and his visible kingdom, were still objects of hope to the Church, not fulfilled realities. It was announced here and elsewhere, that a division and weakening of the Fourth Empire must occur before the kingdom of

Messiah, in its full brightness, should dawn on the world. And no sooner had the Emperors received the faith than this predicted change began to ensue. The Gospel became a savour of life unto life, and of death unto death. Those who welcomed it in their heart were removed, from year to year, to be heirs in the resurrection of that promised kingdom. The empire at large did not thus receive it; and withering, weakness, and division were the fruits which they reaped from their perverseness. A moral blight palsied the strength of the state. The Gospel, like the law, though ordained unto life, became death to the idolatrous empire, and fulfilled the Divine prediction of that empire's weakness and decay.

The removal of the seat of the monarchy, under Constantine, was one first token of this period of feebleness and division, Before the territory peculiar to Rome was torn and rent asunder, it was first loosened from those enormous conquests, by which the three former empires had been incorporated in its vast dominions. Such very speedily was the result, after a new Rome had been reared on the Bosphorus. Under Valens and Valentinian the separation took a permanent form; and the fulfilment of the present verse may be dated from their reign. Thus Gibbon remarks, that 'from the reign of Valens may justly be dated the disastrous period of the fall of the Roman empire.' In like manner he observes on the triumph of Diocletian. 'In the eyes of posterity it is remarkable by a distinction of a less honourable kind. It was the last that Rome ever beheld Soon after this period the emperors ceased to vanquish, and Rome ceased to be the capital of the empire.'

The mixture of clay with the iron may denote the entrance of a new and foreign element, to weaken the cohesion of the monarchy, and destroy the unity of its power. Or it may describe a change in the iron empire itself, in which, like veins that grow sterile, it loses its metallic strength, and comes to resemble a feebler element. Both characters were fulfilled in this period.

Patriotism and Roman prowess declined, and barbarians were mixed with the citizens of the empire.

The enactments of Constantine seem to have borne a great share in producing this internal weakness. 'He instituted in the empire the nice balance of civil and military powers. The emulation, and sometimes *the discord, between two professions of opposite interests and incompatible manners*, was productive of beneficial and of pernicious consequences. While the one delayed to offer the assistance which the other disdained to solicit, the troops frequently remained without orders, or without supplies; the public safety was betrayed, and the defenceless subjects left exposed to the fury of the barbarians. *This divided administration relaxed the vigour of the state*, while it secured the tranquillity of the monarch.'

'The memory of Constantine has been deservedly censured for another innovation, which corrupted military discipline, and prepared the ruin of the empire. After the use of internal garrisons had ceased with the civil war, the conqueror wanted either wisdom or firmness to revive the severe discipline of Diocletian, and to suppress a fatal indulgence, which habit had endeared and almost confirmed to the military order. From the reign of Constantine, a popular and almost legal distinction was admitted between the Palatines and the Borderers; the troops of the court, as they were improperly styled, and the troops of the frontier. The former, elevated by superior pay and privileges, were permitted, except in the extraordinary emergencies of war, to occupy their tranquil stations in the heart of the provinces. The most flourishing cities were oppressed by the intolerable weight of quarters. The soldiers insensibly forgot the virtues of their profession, and contracted only the vices of civil life. They were either degraded by the industry of mechanic trades, or enervated by the luxury of baths and theatres. They soon became careless of their martial exercises, curious in their diet and apparel; and while they inspired terror

to the subjects of the empire, they trembled at the hostile approach of the barbarians. The chain of fortifications which extended along the banks of the great rivers, was no longer maintained with the same care, or defended with the same vigilance. The numbers which still remained under the name of the troops of the frontier, might be sufficient for the ordinary defence. But their spirit was degraded by the humiliating reflection, that *they*, who were exposed to the hardships and dangers of a perpetual warfare, were rewarded only with about two-thirds of the pay and emoluments which were lavished on the troops of the court. It was in vain that Constantine repeated the most dreadful menaces of fire and sword against the Borderers who should dare to desert their colours, to connive at the inroads of the barbarians, or to participate in the spoil. The mischiefs that flow from injudicious counsels are seldom removed by the application of partial severities; and though succeeding princes laboured to restore the strength and numbers of the frontier garrisons, the empire, till the last moment of its dissolution, continued to languish under the mortal wound which had been so rashly or weakly inflicted by the hand of Constantine.'

In the nature of the Roman levies, the same weakness may be seen, at this time, mingling with and debasing the strength of the empire. 'In various states of society, armies are recruited from very different motives. Barbarians are urged by the love of war; the citizens of a free republic may be prompted by a principle of duty; but the timid and luxurious inhabitants of a declining empire must be allured by the hope of profit, or compelled by the dread of punishment. The resources of the Roman treasury were exhausted by the increase of pay, by the repetition of donatives, and by the intervention of new emoluments and indulgences, which in the opinion of the provincial youth, might compensate the hardships and dangers of a military life. Yet although the stature was lowered; although slaves, at least by a tacit connivance, were indiscriminately re-

ceived into the ranks, the insurmountable difficulty of procuring an adequate supply of volunteers obliged the emperors to adopt coercive measures. Such was the horror for the profession of a soldier which had affected the minds of the degenerate Romans, that many of the youth of Italy and of the provinces chose to cut off the fingers of their right hand to escape from being pressed into the service; and this strange expedient was so commonly practised, as to deserve the severe animadversion of the laws, and a peculiar name in the Latin language.'

The description which Gibbon quotes from Ammianus, of the Roman nobility, overcharged as it may be, gives a lively picture of this internal change which was passing over the empire. Its military powers, and the energy of patriotism, were ebbing fast away, and pride and luxury were debasing its proudest senators and nobles into the miry clay of sensual corruption. The view of the Roman world which closes the reign of Theodosius, illustrates the same truth. 'The mad prodigality which prevails in the confusion of a shipwreck, or a siege, may serve to explain the progress of luxury amidst the misfortunes and terrors of a sinking nation. The effeminate luxury which affected the manners of courts and cities, had instilled a secret and destructive poison into the camp of the legions. It is the just and important observation of Vegetius, that the infantry was invariably covered with defensive armour from the foundation of the city to the reign of the Emperor Gratian. The relaxation of discipline and the disuse of exercise, rendered the soldiers less able and less willing to support the fatigues of the service; they complained of the weight of the armour, which they seldom wore, and they successively obtained the permission of laying aside both their cuirasses and their helmets. The heavy weapons of their ancestors, the short sword, and the formidable *pilum*, which had subdued the world, *dropped insensibly from their feeble hands*. . . . The loss of armies, the destruction of cities, and the dis-

honour of the Roman name, ineffectually solicited the successors of Gratian to restore the helmets and cuirasses of the infantry. The enervated soldiers abandoned their own and the public defence; and their pusillanimous indolence may be considered as the immediate cause of the downfall of the empire.'

But this mixture of clay with the iron may equally denote the introduction of a strange and foreign element, the effect of which should be to weaken the strength and cohesion of the empire. And this was eminently true in the period which followed the accession of Valens. We may perhaps distinguish three stages of the mixture,—barbarian levies, foreign mercenaries, and open conquests.

'The introduction of barbarians into the Roman armies, became every day more universal, more necessary, and more fatal. The most daring of the Scythians, of the Goths, and of the Germans, who delighted in war, and who found it more profitable to defend than to ravage the provinces, were enrolled, not only in the auxiliaries, but in the legions themselves, and among the most distinguished of the Palatine troops. . . . The barbarian soldiers who displayed any military talents, were advanced without exception to the most important commands, and the names of the tribunes, of the counts, and dukes, and of the generals themselves, betray a foreign origin, which they no longer condescended to disguise. They were often entrusted with the conduct of a war against their countrymen; and though most of them preferred the ties of allegiance to those of blood, they did not always avoid the guilt, or at least the suspicion, of a treasonable correspondence with the enemy, of inviting his invasion, or sparing his retreat. The camps and palace of the sons of Constantine, were governed by the powerful faction of the Franks, who preserved the strictest connexion with each other, and with their country, and resented every personal affront as a national indignity. When the tyrant Caligula was suspected of intending to invest a very extraordinary

candidate with the consular robes, the profanation would scarcely have excited less astonishment, if, instead of a horse, the proudest chieftain of Germany or Britain, had been the object of his choice. The revolution of three centuries had produced so remarkable a change in the prejudices of the people, that, with the public approbation, Constantine showed his successors the example of bestowing the honours of the consulship on the barbarians who by their merit and services had deserved to be ranked among the first of the Romans. But as these hardy veterans, who had been educated in ignorance or contempt of the laws, were incapable of exercising any civil offices, the powers of the human mind were contracted by the *irreconcileable separation* of talents as well as of professions.'

Under the reign of Theodosius, and those which followed, this mingling of the miry clay with the iron, was still more exemplified in the foreign mercenaries employed in the service of the empire. 'The funeral of Athanaric was performed with solemn rites in the capital of the east, and his whole army, won by the liberal courtesy and decent grief of Theodosius, enlisted under the standard of the Roman empire. . . An army of forty thousand Goths was maintained for the perpetual service of the empire of the east, and these haughty troops who assumed the title of *federati* or allies, were distinguished by their gold collars, liberal pay, and licentious privileges. Their native courage was improved by the use of arms, and the knowledge of discipline, and while the republic was guarded or threatened by the doubtful sword of the barbarians, the last sparks of the military flame were finally extinguished in the minds of the Romans. . . . . The advocates of Theodosius could affirm, with some appearance of truth and reason, that it was impossible to extirpate so many warlike tribes who were rendered desperate by the loss of their native country ; and that the exhausted provinces would be revived by a fresh supply of soldiers and husbandmen. The barbarians still wore an

angry and hostile aspect ; but the experience of past times might encourage the hope, that they would acquire the habits of industry and obedience, . . . and that their posterity would insensibly blend with the great body of the Roman people. Notwithstanding these specious arguments and sanguine expectations, it was apparent to every discerning eye that the Goths would long remain the enemies, and might soon become the conquerors, of the Roman empire.'

But the actual settlement of barbarian tribes within the limits of the western monarchy seems to be the fact chiefly designed in these words of the prophecy. Sir Isaac Newton, in his remarks on Daniel, gives the following sketch of the history, which is at once brief and comprehensive.

'About the year 373 or 374, the Burgundians rose from their seats on the Vistula, with an army of eighty thousand men, to invade Gaul ; and being opposed, seated themselves upon the northern side of the Rhine over against Mentz. In the year 358, a body of the Salian Franks, with their king, coming from the river Sala, were received into the empire by the Emperor Julian, and seated in Gaul between Brabant and the Rhine ; and their king Mellobaudes was made *comes domesticorum* by the Emperor Gratian. Richomer, another noble Salian Frank, was made *comes domesticorum*, and *magister utriusque militiae*, by Theodosius, and A.D. 384, was consul with Clearchus. He was a great favourite of Theodosius, and accompanied him in his wars against Eugenius, but died in the expedition, and left a son called Theudomir, who afterwards became king of the Salian Franks in Brabant. At the time of this war, some Franks from beyond the Rhine invaded Gaul under the conduct of Genobald, Marcomir, and Suno, but were repulsed by Stilicho, and Marcomir being slain, was succeeded in Germany by his son Pharamond.

'While these nations remained quiet within the empire, subject to the Romans, many others continued so

beyond the Danube, till the death of Theodosius, and then rose up in arms. For Paulus Diaconus speaking of the times after the death of this emperor, tells us,—'At the same time the Goths and other very great nations were dwelling beyond the Danube; of which four are more civilized,—the Goths, Visigoths, Gepidae, and Vandals, changing only their name, and nothing else. These, under Arcadius and Honorius, passed the Danube, and were placed in the Roman empire; and the Gepidae, from whom the Lombards and Avars afterwards were parted, dwelt in the open towns about Singidunum and Sirmium.' Procopius, in his history of the Vandals, writes to the same purpose. Hitherto the western empire continued entire, but now broke into many pieces.

'Theodosius died A.D. 395, and then the Visigoths, under Alaric, rose from their seats in Thrace, and wasted Macedon and Epirus with fire and sword for five years together; when turning westward they invaded Dalmatia, Illyricum, and Pannonia; and thence went into Italy; and the next year, (A.D. 403,) were so beaten at Pollentia and Berona by Stilicho, the general of the western empire, that Claudius calls the remainder of Alaric's forces—'scanty relics of so great a nation;' and Prudentius, 'a nation extinguished.' On this Alaric made peace with the Emperor, being so far humbled, that Orosius says, he 'suppliantly and simply prayed for a most salutary peace, and some settlements.' The peace was ratified by mutual hostages, and Alaric continued a free prince in the seats now granted to him.

'When Alaric took up arms, the nations beyond the Danube began to be in motion; and the next winter (A.D. 395-6,) a great body of the Huns, Alans, Ostrogoths, Gepides, and other northern nations, came over the frozen Danube, being invited by Rufinus; when their brethren, who had obtained seats within the empire, took up arms also. Jerome calls this great multitude Huns, Alans, Vandals, Goths, Sarmatians, Quadi

and Marcomans; and says that they invaded all places between Constantinople and the Julian Alps, wasting Scythia, Thrace, Macedon, Dardania, Dacia, Thessaly, Achaia, Epirus, Dalmatia, and all Pannonia. The Servians also invaded Rhaetia; for when Alaric ravaged Pannonia, the Romans were defending Rhaetia, which gave Alaric an opportunity of invading Italy, as Claudian mentions—

> Non nisi perfidia nacti penetrabile tempus,
> Irrupere Getæ, nostras dum Rhaetia vires
> Occupat, atque alio desudant marte cohortes.

And when Alaric went from those parts into Italy, some other barbarous nations invaded Noricum and Vindelicia, as the same poet writes.

'This was in the years 402 and 403. And among these nations I reckon the Sueves, Quades, and Marcomans, for they were all in arms at this time. The Quades and Marcomans were Suevian nations; and they and the Sueves came originally from Bohemia, and the river Suevus or Sprake in Lusatia; and were now united under one common king, called Ermeric, who soon after led them into Gallia. The Vandals and Alans might also about this time, extend themselves into Noricum. Uldin also, with a great body of Huns passed the Danube about the time of Chrysostom's banishment, that is, A.D. 404, and wasted Thrace and Mœsia; Radagaisus, king of the Gruthunni, inviting over more barbarous nations from beyond the Danube, invaded Italy with an army of above 200,000 Goths; and within a year or two, was overcome by Stilicho, and perished with his army. In this war Stilicho was assisted with a great body of Huns and Ostrogoths, under the conduct of Uldin and Sarus, who were hired by the Emperor Honorius. In all this confusion it was necessary for the Lombards in Pannonia to arm themselves in their own defence, and assert their liberty, the Romans being no longer able to protect them.

'And now Stilicho purposing to make himself Empe-

ror, procured a military prefecture for Alaric, and sent him into the east in the service of Honorius the western emperor, committing some Roman troops to his conduct to strengthen his army of Gauls, and promising to follow soon after with his own army. His pretence was to recover some regions of Illyricum ; but his secret design to make himself emperor, by the assistance of the Vandals and their allies, for he himself was a Vandal. For facilitating this design, he invited a great body of the barbarous nations to invade the western empire, while he and Alaric invaded the eastern. And these nations under their several kings, the Vandals under Godegesilus ; the Alans in two bodies, one under Goar, the other under Resplendial, and the Sueves, Quades, and Marcomans, under Ermeric, marched through Rhaetia to the side of the Rhine, leaving their seats in Pannonia to the Huns and Ostrogoths, and joined the Burgundians under Gundicur, and ruffled the Franks in their further march. On the last of December, A.D. 406, they passed the Rhine at Mentz, and spread themselves into the first Germany and the adjacent regions ; and amongst other actions the Vandals took Triers. Then they advanced into Belgium, and begun to waste that country ; whereupon the Salian Franks in Brabant took up arms, and under the conduct of Theudomer, the son of Richomer, made so stout a resistance, that they slew almost twenty thousand of the Vandals, with their king Godegesilus, in battle ; the rest escaping only by a party of Alans that came timely to their assistance.

'Then the British soldiers, alarmed by the rumour of these things, revolted, and set up tyrants there : first Marcus, whom they slew presently ; then Gratian, whom they slew within four months ; and lastly Constantine, under whom they invaded Gaul, A.D. 408, being favoured by Guar and Gundrian. And Constantine having possessed a good part of Gaul, created his son Constans, Caesar, and sent him into Spain to order his affairs there, A.D. 409.

'In the mean time, Resplendial, seeing the disaster of

the Vandals, and that Goar was gone over to the Romans, led his army to the Rhine, and together with the Sueves and residue of the Vandals, led his army towards Spain ; the Franks in the meantime prosecuting their victory so far as to retake Triers, which, after they had plundered it, they left to the Romans. The barbarians were at first stopped by the Pyrenean mountains, which made them spread themselves into Aquitaine ; but the next year the passage was betrayed by some soldiers of Constans ; and entering Spain 4 Kal. Oct. A.D. 409, they conquered every one what he could ; and at length A.D. 411, *divided their conquests by lot.* The Vandals obtained Boetica, and part of Gallicia ; the Sueves the rest of Gallicia ; and the Alani Lusitania and the Carthagenian provinces ; the emperor for the sake of peace confirming them in those seats by grant A.D. 413.

'The Roman Franks above mentioned, having made Theudomir their king, began after their conquest of the Vandals to invade their neighbours also. The first were the Gauls of Brabant ; but meeting with notable resistance, they desired their alliance ; and so the Gauls fell off from the Romans, and made a league with the Franks to be as one people, marrying with one another, and conforming to one another's customs, till they became one without distinction. Thus by the access of these Gauls, and of the foreign Franks also, the Salian kingdom soon grew very great and powerful.

'Stilicho's expedition against the Greek empire was stopped by order of Honorius, and then Alaric came out of Epirus into Noricum, and requested a sum of money for his service. The senate were inclined to deny him, but granted it by Stilicho's mediation. But after some time Stilicho being accused of conspiracy, and slain, August 408, Alaric was disappointed of his money, and reputed an enemy to the empire. He then broke straight into Italy with the army he brought out of Epirus, and sent to his brother Adolphus to follow him, with what forces he had in Pannonia. Thereupon Honorius, fearing to be shut up in Rome, retired to

Ravenna, Oct. A. D. 408, and from that time Ravenna continued the seat of the western emperors. In those days also the Huns invaded Pannonia, and seizing the deserted seats of the Vandals, Alans, and Goths, founded a new kingdom there. Alaric advancing to Rome besieged it, and 9 Kal. Sept. A. D. 410, took it ; and afterwards attempting to pass into Africa, was shipwrecked. After which Honorious made peace with him, and got up an army to send against the tyrant Constantine.

'At the same time Gerontius, one of Constantine's captains, revolted from him, and set up Maximus emperor in Spain. Whereupon Constantine sent Edobec, another of his captains, to draw to his assistance the barbarians under Goar and Gundicur in Gaul, and Franks and Alans from beyond the Rhine ; and committed the custody of Vienne in Narbonensis to his son Constans. Gerontius first slew Constans at Vienne, and then began to besiege Constantine at Arles. But Honorius at the same time sending Constantius with an army on the same errand, Gerontius fled, and Constantius continued the siege, strengthened by the accession of most of the soldiers of Gerontius. After four months, Edobec having procured succours, the barbarian kings at Mentz, Goar and Gundicur, made Jovinus emperor, and with him set forward to relieve Arles. At their approach Constantius retired. They pursued, and he beat them by surprize ; but not prosecuting his victory, the barbarians soon recovered themselves ; yet not so as to hinder the fall of Constantine, Jovinus, and Maximus. Britain could not be recovered to the empire, but remained ever after a distinct kingdom.

'The next year, A. D. 412, the Visigoths being beaten, in Italy, had Aquitaine granted them to retire to ; and they invaded it with much violence, causing the Alans and Burgundians to retreat, who were then laying it waste. At the same time the Burgundians were brought to peace, and the emperor granted them for inheritance a region on the Rhine which they had invaded ; and the same, I presume, he did with the Alans. But the

Franks, not long after, retaking and burning Triers, Castinus was sent with an army against them A. D. 415, who routed them, and slew Theudomir their king. This was the second capture of Triers by the Franks. Theudomir was succeeded by Pharamond, the prince of the Salian Franks in Germany. From thence he brought new forces, and had seats granted to his people in the empire, near the Rhine.

'And now the barbarians were all quieted, and settled in several kingdoms within the empire, not only by conquest, but also by the grants of the emperor Honorius. For Rutilius in his Itinerary, written in autumn, A. U. C. 1169, or A. D. 416, thus laments the wasted fields :—

> Illa quidem longis nimium deformia bellis.

And he then adds,

> Jam tempus laceris post longa incendia fundis,
> Vel pastorales ædificare casas.

And a little after,

> Æternum tibi Rhenus aret.

'And Orosius, in the end of his history, finished A. D. 417, represents the general pacification of the barbarous nations by the words, *comprimere, coangustare, addicere gentes immanissimas;* terming them *imperio addictas,* because they had obtained seats in the empire by league and compact; and *coangustatas,* because they did no longer invade all regions at pleasure, but by the same compact remained quiet in the seats then granted them. And these are the kingdoms of which the feet of the image were henceforward composed, and which are represented by iron and clay intermixed, which did not cleave one to another, and were of different strength.'

This summary of Sir Isaac Newton appears to be exact and full, though perhaps the character of Stilicho may have been impeached by the authors from whom he quotes without solid evidence. A marked and evi-

dent change had now taken place in the fabric of the mighty empire, and the feet of iron were become mingled with clay.

It is instructive to remark the contrast between these barbarian inroads, and the previous conquests of Persia and Greece, when one empire succeeded to another. The barbarians disclaimed, we are told, the title of conquerors; they assumed that of the *guests* of the Romans. They petitioned for places and titles from the Emperor as a peculiar honour, when the strength of the empire had almost entirely crumbled away. The triumphs of a thousand years, the magnificence of the imperial city, had left a deep and indelible impression behind them; and the rude tribes of the north were engrafted on the existing polity of Rome, and borrowed from its laws, institutions, and titles, the chief elements of their political power. Hence the prophecy views it as the continuance of the same empire, but in a form entirely different, with fresh powers springing up in the body of the kingdom. And the more closely we trace the later history of Europe, the more exact the symbol will appear. Union and contrast are alike conspicuous in every part of the Christian commonwealth, when compared with the laws and institutes of ancient Rome.

But the change was as yet incomplete. The union still subsisted, and the empire had not completely fallen. Another stage presently ensued, when the separate toes of the image came into the full possession of independent power. This latter stage of Roman division will form the next subject of comparison between the events of history and the inspired prophecy; and at every step the truth of the prediction and its accurate fulfilment will shine forth with growing clearness and beauty.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FOURTH PROPHETIC EMPIRE.

LATER STAGES OF DIVISION.

A. D. 476—1800.

DAN. II. 42.—"AND AS THE TOES OF THE FEET WERE PART OF IRON, AND PART OF CLAY, SO THE KINGDOM SHALL BE PARTLY STRONG, AND PARTLY BROKEN."

43.—"AND WHEREAS THOU SAWEST IRON MIXED WITH MIRY CLAY, THEY SHALL MINGLE THEMSELVES WITH THE SEED OF MEN: BUT THEY SHALL NOT CLEAVE ONE TO ANOTHER, EVEN AS IRON IS NOT MIXED WITH CLAY."

THESE two verses contain a more distinct mention of the division of the Fourth Empire. They form a brief sketch of European history, in its main outlines, from the fall of the Roman empire in the west down to the present day. There are two or three remarks which the prophecy suggests, before entering on a rapid outline of those events by which it has been fulfilled.

And first, these verses, unlike the former, describe a complete separation of the empire into various kingdoms. The feet of iron mixed with clay would naturally imply weakness and confusion, but gave no clear token that the unity of the empire had ceased. But now the toes only are mentioned, which fitly represents a division into many powers. The Fourth Empire, after crumbling into weakness, was thus to resolve itself at length into separate governments. The event exactly corresponds. After more than two centuries of decay and confusion, distinct monarchies arose throughout Western Europe on the fall of the imperial power.

There is here, however, no mention of the number of these kingdoms. The toes are named, but the number *ten* is not specified. So far as this vision is concerned, there is no need for an exact determination. The Spirit of God would thus teach us, first, to ascertain the broader features of the fulfilment; and only when these have been secured, to pass on by their help to the minuter details.

The two verses before us contain two distinct predictions. The first of them announces the separation and diversity of the kingdoms; the second, repeated attempts to effect a re-union. The words readily suggest, from their order, the notion of two successive stages, one marked by confusion and division, the other by mutual leagues and alliances. The history reveals a distinction of the same kind. From the sixth to the twelfth century the annals of Europe relate chiefly to separate states. After that time, their main feature is the balance of power, and the shifting alliances and intermarriages among the European sovereigns.

The toes, part of iron and part of clay, imply a various measure of strength in the divided kingdoms. But their heterogeneous character is still more plainly intended. They will not cleave one to another. Both these features have also been manifest in the history of the European states. Some have been strong, and others feeble; but all alike have resisted the efforts of ambition to unite them into one.

Let us now trace rapidly the events by which these verses have been accomplished. The historian of the Decline and Fall describes the first steps of that fulfilment in these words:—

'At that unhappy period (of the fall of the empire), the Saxons fiercely struggled with the natives for the possession of Britain. Gaul and Spain were divided between the powerful monarchies of the Franks and Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms of the Suevi and Burgundians. Africa was exposed to the cruel persecution of the Vandals, and the savage insults of the

Moors. Rome and Italy, as far as the banks of the Danube, were afflicted by an army of barbarian mercenaries, whose lawless tyranny was succeeded by the reign of Theodoric the Ostrogoth. All the subjects of the empire, who, by the use of the Latin language, more particularly deserved the name and privileges of Romans, were oppressed by the disgrace and calamities of foreign conquest; and the victorious nations of Germany established a new system of manners and government in the western countries of Europe. The majesty of Rome was faintly represented by the princes of Constantinople, the feeble and imaginary successors of Augustus.'

Thus, at the time when the western empire fell, nine or ten distinct powers evidently arose, and occupied with contending strength and weakness its broken territory. The history, at the first glance, reflects all the leading features of the prophetic description.

The changes which followed, in Italy and the other states, are so various and complex as scarcely to admit of a brief narration. Within twenty years from the fall of the empire, Odoacer was overthrown by Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, (A.D. 493.) 'From the Alps to the extremity of Calabria, he reigned by right of conquest: the Vandal ambassadors surrendered the island of Sicily, as a lawful appendage of his kingdom: and he was accepted as the deliverer of Rome by the senate and people.'

The Gothic kingdom lasted forty years, and then was overthrown by Belisarius, whose triumphs Narses completed. Soon after, the Lombards, under Alboin their king (A.D. 568,) conquered the whole of Northern Italy, as far as Ravenna and Rome. 'During two hundred years, Italy was unequally divided between the Lombard kingdom and the exarchate of Ravenna. The jurisdiction of the exarchs extended over the modern Romagna, the valleys of Ferrara, and Pentapolis. Three subordinate provinces of Rome, Venice, and Naples, acknowledged their supremacy. The three islands of Sardinia, Corsica, and Sicily, still adhered to the empire:

and the acquisition of the further Calabria removed the landmark of Autharis from Regium to the isthmus of Consentia. The remainder of Italy was possessed by the Lombards. The dukes or princes of Beneventum survived the monarchy of the Lombards, and propagated their name. From Capua to Tarentum, they reigned near five hundred years over the greatest part of the present kingdom of Naples.'

The Lombard kingdom was overthrown by Charlemagne; and his successors, amidst great distractions, continued to reign for near a century. The dukes of Friuli and Spoleto then disputed the sovereignty. Berengarius at length prevailed, but was dethroned by Rodolph, king of the two Burgundies, who received the like fate from Hugh of Provence; as did Lothario, the son of Hugh, from Berengarius the Second. Italy was then conquered by Otho, and remained more than a century subject to the German emperors (A.D. 936—1039). Meanwhile the Normans established themselves in Apulia and Calabria, and finally in Sicily also, expelling the Greeks. The conflict then began, under Hildebrand, between the Popes and the Emperors. At the same time the Lombard republics rose to liberty and eminence, while Venice had long been advancing to wealth and naval power.

Similar changes occurred in France and Spain. In 507 Clovis overthrew the kingdoms of the Visigoths in the south of France; but the monarchy, after his death, suffered a threefold division. In 714 Charles Martel assumed the authority, and in 752 Pepin his son, with the sanction of Pope Zachary, received the title of king. After Charlemagne and his son Louis, the empire was again divided. Meanwhile, the Normans ravaged France, and settled themselves in Normandy; and the duke of Brittany usurped the title of king. At the accession of the Capetian line (A.D. 987), France was thus broken up into six or seven independent provinces. Burgundy and Flanders were also become separate powers.

In Spain, the kingdom of the Visigoths, under Leovigild, swallowed up that of the Sueves, and lasted till the Saracen invasion (A.D. 714) when it was completely overthrown. Pelayo, however, formed a small Christian kingdom in the mountains of Asturia. Charlemagne also recovered from the Moors the provinces north of the Ebro. Fourteen years after his death, the kingdom of Navarre was founded; and in the next generation, under Alphonso, that of Asturia rose into greater power. Castile, in the middle of the tenth, and Arragon, at the opening of the eleventh century, became separate princedoms. About the same time also, Portugal was erected into a distinct government.

From this period the history of Europe becomes one ceaseless illustration of the second feature in the prediction. Its governments had now regained, in some degree, a definite and civilized form. A series of ambitious struggles began, and were continued with perseverance, by alliance and conquest, to blend together the separated fragments of the empire. They mingled themselves with the seed of men; but they did not cleave together, even as iron is not mixed with clay. A few extracts from the history of France, Austria, and Italy, will illustrate the fulfilment. The first is from Hallam's Middle Ages, and relates to France in the twelfth century.

'There still remained five great and ancient fiefs of the French crown, Champagne, Guienne, Flanders, Burgundy, and Brittany. But Philip the Fair married the heiress of the first a little before his father's death, and it was thus in a political sense no longer a part of the feudal body. Louis, the son of Philip had possessed in right of his mother, the kingdom of Navarre, with the counties of Champagne and Brie. On his death, Philip, his next brother, assumed the regency of France and Navarre.' The union, however, was temporary. 'Jane and her husband, the Count of Evreux, recovered Navarre after the death of Charles the Fair.'

'The compact of Troyes stipulated that Henry V.,

on his marriage with Catharine, should become immediately regent of France ; and after the death of Charles, succeed to the kingdom ; in exclusion not only of the dauphin, but of all the royal family.' But when the union of these two great kingdoms was nearly complete, Providence interfered, and frustrated the design. 'The affairs of Charles were restored by one of the most marvellous revolutions in history. A country girl overthrew all the power of England. All the *inheritance* of Henry II. and Eleanor, all the conquests of Edward III. and Henry V., except Calais, were irrecoverably torn away. A barren title, that idle trophy of disappointed ambition, was preserved with strange obstinacy to our own age.'

In the imperial line of Austria, the same cause had still more powerful influence. Its effects may be given in the words of a Roman Catholic historian.

'In this period of the history of the Austrian princes, nothing is so remarkable as their FORTUNATE MARRIAGES. Six in particular have attracted the notice of historians. They have given rise to the celebrated distich :—

> Bella gerant alli : tu felix Austria, nube :
> Nam quæ Mars aliis, dat tibi regna Venus.
> Blest Austria, wed—to others wars resign ;
> Mars gives them kingdoms—Venus sends thee thine.

'These six fortunate marriages were—that of Albert I. with the heiress of Carinthia and the Tyrol ; that of Albert II. with the heiress of Ferrette in Alsatia ; that of Albert V. with the heiress of Bohemia and Hungary ; that of Maximilian with the heiress of Burgundy and the Netherlands ; that of Philip IV. with the heiress of Spain, Naples, and Sicily ; and that of Ferdinand I. with the heiress of Bohemia and Hungary, which restored those kingdoms to the house of Austria, from which, after the former acquisition of them, they had passed into another family.'

'Of these the marriage of Maximilian with the heiress

of Burgundy and the Netherlands is the most remarkable. Mention has been made of the kingdom of Burgundy; the duchy and county of Burgundy must be distinguished from this, and from each other. Both of them centered in Charles the Bold; and he also inherited the possessions of the dukes of Lower Lorraine and Brabant, of the earls of Flanders, and the counts of Hainault. Mary, his daughter and heiress, married Maximilian the First. On the death of Charles, Louis XI. of France seized on Burgundy as an escheat, and annexed it to his kingdom; but Mary carried the rest of her dominions to the house of Austria. This seizure of Burgundy was the cause of wars, which lasted with little intermission from that marriage to the middle of last century.'

Let us now trace briefly, in order of time, some of the chief examples of this alliance by marriage among the states of Christendom, and the fruitless attempts to reunite the various kingdoms into one.

In the beginning of the eleventh century, Canute sought to unite permanently the crowns of England and Denmark, by his marriage with Emma, widow of Ethelred, and sister of the duke of Normandy. But within seven years the Saxon line was restored, and the two kingdoms were separated again. The previous marriage of Emma with Ethelred led the way also to the claims of William, and the Norman conquest.

The process of reunion, after that event, seemed for a time to be more successful. The marriage of Henry I. with Matilda, niece of Edgar Atheling, and heiress of the Saxon line, tended powerfully to unite the two races into one. Her daughter Matilda, by her mariage with Geoffrey Plantagenet, gave birth to a new royal line, and added Anjou and Touraine to the dominions of Henry II. From her he also inherited Normandy and Maine. By his marriage with Eleanor, Guienne and Poitou were added to his possessions, and Brittany soon after.

But these approaches to an incorporation were short-

lived and transient. 'The scene quite changed when Philip, son of Louis VII., came on the stage. Even Richard I. with all his prowess, lost ground in struggling against an adversary, not less active and more politic than himself. . . In two years, Normandy, Maine, and Anjou were irrecoverably lost.'

In the twelfth century, Henry the son of Frederic the Emperor, was married to Constantia, the sister of William, duke of Naples and Sicily. On their death he became heir both of the empire and the kingdom. Tancred, however, her brother, seized upon Naples and Sicily, and the emperor found it impossible to regain possession.

After the Sicilian vespers (A.D. 1282) the crown of Sicily was offered to Peter of Arragon, in consequence of his marriage with Constance, daughter of Manfred, the former duke. The island was thus severed from Anjou and Naples, and joined to the kingdom of Arragon. But after thirteen years it was severed from Arragon also. In 1409, Martin V. having married the heiress of Sicily, they were reunited. In the next reign they were separated again, till Alphonso V. united Arragon, Sicily, and Naples once more. Naples however was again separate in the very next reign.

In the fourteenth century, a similar connexion united the crowns of Hungary and Naples. Andrew the son of Carobert inherited the crown of Hungary from his father, and Naples from his wife Joanna. But the union was quickly dissolved. The king was murdered, and Louis the successor sought in vain to restore the union.

At the same period took place the marriage of Edward II. with Isabella of France, so celebrated alike in history and poetry; the occasion of the claims of Edward III., and of those bloody wars which desolated France more than a hundred years. The alliance of Henry V. with Catharine has been already mentioned, which had the same purpose, and was equally unavailing.

About A.D. 1370, Philip of Burgundy, by marriage

with Margaret, heiress of Louis the count of Flanders, united Artois, Flanders, Franche Comtè, and Nivernois to his dominions. But in the next century these were again separated, and united to other kingdoms.

In 1389, 'the union of Valentine, daughter of Gian Gallazzo with the duke of Orleans, produced important consequences, and served to transmit a claim to her descendants Louis XII. and Francis I., from which the long calamities of Italy in the beginning of the sixteenth century were chiefly derived.'

In virtue of the former alliance of Constantia, heiress of Manfred, with Peter of Arragon, Sicily in 1458 was again separated from Naples, and united to Arragon.

In the close of that century two alliances were projected with a similar view. By the marriage of Charles VIII. with Anne of Brittany, that province was united to France. But other effects ensued of a different kind. Anne had been previously betrothed to the emperor. 'Charles had long been engaged, by the treaty of Arras, to marry the daughter of Maximilian. The double injury which the latter sustained in the marriage of Charles with the heiress of Brittany seemed likely to excite a protracted conflict; but the king of France came to an accommodation, by which he restored Artois and Franche Comté.'

The union of Castile and Arragon, unlike the previous instances, was permanently effected by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella (A.D. 1479.) A few years earlier, James of Scotland married the daughter of the king of Denmark, and obtained the Orkneys and Shetlands as her dowry.

Soon after, at the close of the century, (A.D. 1496) Philip the son of Maximilian, married Joanna, the daughter of queen Isabella; and thus under their son Charles V. the empire, the Netherlands, Spain, Sicily, and Naples, were all united under one sovereign. But they did not cleave together. With the abdication of Charles the union came to an end.

At the same time Louis XII. in virtue of his claim by

marriage, seized on Milan and Genoa, but lost them in a few years. Francis I. recovered Milan, (A. D. 1515) but soon afterwards lost it, with all his Italian conquests, at the battle of Pavia, (A. D. 1525.)

In the same year, (A. D. 1515) Bohemia was reunited to the dominions of the Austrian family, and Louis of France also married the princess Mary of England. But in spite of this alliance, within a few years these two nations were at war.

On the accession of Mary to the throne of England, she was married to Philip of Spain, with a view to the union of the two monarchies. But her speedy death without issue frustrated this design.

In 1558, four years later, the dauphin of France married the queen of Scotland. This attempt at union was equally fruitless. The deposition and death of Mary dissolved the connexion for ever.

In 1580, Philip II. of Spain, as nephew of Henry I. of Portugal, by his mother's side, claimed the vacant throne, and obtained it for a season. But in less than sixty years the oppression of the Spanish government led to revolt, the duke of Braganza was raised to the throne, and Portugal became once more a separate kingdom. The Mantuan war of succession arose at the same time.

In 1612, after the accession of Louis XIII. a double alliance was contracted by marriage between the sovereigns of France and Spain. Twelve years later, the marriage of Charles with Henrietta, sister of Louis, united with France and England. But in spite of all these alliances, within four years three wars arose, between England and Spain, England and France, and France and Spain.

In 1659, at the peace of the Pyrenees, Louis XIV. received in marriage the daughter of Philip IV. Eighteen years later, the Prince of Orange married Mary, the niece of Charles II. the daughter of James, and afterwards queen of England. Yet no permanent union was effected, either between France and Spain, or Holland and Britain.

It is needless to dwell on the two famous wars which form so large a part of the history of the last century, the war of the Spanish succession 1701—1712, and that of the Austrian succession, between Maria Theresa and Frederic the Great. Two other instances still more recent serve equally to illustrate the prophecy ; in both of which an alliance designed to ensure amity led only to more bitter and deadly conflict ; the marriage of Louis XVI. with Maria Antionette, and of Maria Louisa with Napoleon. From the time of Canute and Henry down to the last generation, the words have been fulfilled :—" They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men ; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

The character of unequal strength has also been equally conspicuous in these divided powers, from the fall of the empire down to the present times. At the former date Gibbon mentions ' the powerful monarchies of the Franks and the Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms of the Sueves and Burgundians.' At most later periods the same distinction has prevailed. England, France, Spain, and the empire, or dominions of Austria, have formed great and powerful kingdoms. And each of them has generally been connected, but not united, with some weaker power, as Scotland, Burgundy or Belgium, Switzerland or Bavaria, Savoy or Tuscany, Naples or Portugal. Yet these smaller kingdoms have never been absorbed in those of superior power. Burgundy was replaced by Piedmont or Navarre, or in later times by Holland and Belgium. Naples or Portugal has always, since the union of Spain into one monarchy, remained distinct, though each in its turn has been incorporated for a season.

This imperfect sketch, which might be greatly enlarged, is enough to show the full harmony between the events and the prediction. From the barbarian inroads which overthrew the empire of the west, to the rise of that conqueror who has revived in our days the memory of Alexander and Cæsar, all modern history has been a

fulfilment of these two sentences of God's word. The separated kingdoms have sought in vain to combine afresh into one single monarchy. Selfish interest, national jealousies, or enlightened patriotism, have prevailed over all the closest ties of alliance ; and a secret spell has baffled the most subtle and strenuous efforts of persevering ambition. The cohesion which could once bind together the vast empires of Babylon, Persia, Macedon and Rome, has passed away from the hearts of the people, and from the councils of their statesmen. New maxims of liberty have been infused into the torpid mass. Selfishness under new forms, or wisdom drawn from long experience, has disdained the yoke which patriotism, leagued with ambition, had imposed on the conquering states of the ancient world. The sentence has been pronounced against every aspiring kingdom, "Hitherto thou shalt go, but no further ; and here shall thy pride of power be stayed." The golden splendour of Babylon is debased into the miry clay of liberal selfishness, which brooks no restraint but that of its own appetites and lusts ; and never will an universal monarchy be established again, until the Lord of heaven shall set up his own everlasting kingdom.

Let us now seek to enter into the spirit of this Divine message, and meditate on some of the holy lessons which it contains. At every stage of the prophecy the same general truths of the Divine foreknowledge and wisdom reappear ; but like the various forms of the kaleidoscope, they present themselves with fresh beauty in every new combination with the ever varying scenes of Divine providence.

And first, let us contemplate the foreknowledge of God, in connection with this stage of His eternal counsels. Known unto Him are all His works from the beginning. But this truth is a living seed which grows and multiplies with a perpetual increase, when we apply it to the successive eras of human history. The verses before us teach us to read its deep meaning, as

applied to the eventful changes of the last thousand years.

Let us once more, in thought, transport ourselves to the palace of Babylon. The youthful seer is unfolding the mysterious vision in the presence of the king. The proud courtiers of Babylon are standing around him, and hang with surprise and breathless attention on his lips. Amidst all the pomp and splendour of the imperial city and its nobles, he predicts its fall, and that three empires will succeed on its ruin; and last and mightiest of these, the iron empire of Rome. He announces that this fourth empire will not fall at once like the others, to be replaced by a successor, but will be rent into various kingdoms, like the toes, distinct and yet united; and which will survive until the kingdom of Messiah is established for ever. In these two verses, taught by the Holy Spirit, he reveals the main features of their history. Therefore, in that hour, the changes of Europe, its princes, its warriors, and its armies, were all spread open before the eye of the revealing Spirit. Even in that moment, when the words were on the prophet's lips, the Spirit of God was looking upon the whole history of those unborn generations. Every family and tribe of each barbarian horde was numbered by his wisdom, while buried amidst the northern forests or the Sarmatian wilds; till nursed into strength, and growing into countless myriads, they burst forth from their gloomy hiding-places, and covered the empire of Rome beneath the furious inundation. The triumphs of the gospel over the proud empire were equally foreseen. An eye of infinite wisdom, even in the days of the prophet, was piercing through all the chaos of feudal anarchy, and all the darkness and confusion of barbarian violence and crime. In the words of this short prediction, like the oak in the acorn, strange and mysterious events lay concealed, to be unfolded, in their appointed season, into the wide and spreading branches of European civilization and greatness. Alfred and the Norman conqueror, Charlemagne

and the heroes of romance: the fierce contentions of Popes and Emperors, the wild fanaticism of the Crusades; the brilliant splendour of Italian republics, rising like a meteor, amidst barbarism and confusion; the bloody wars of England and France, of the Spaniards and Moors, of the Turks and the Christians; the thousand battles which have covered Europe with blood; the wonderful discoveries of art, which have changed the face of the old world, and opened a new world, unvisited before, to the navies of the West; all were clearly pourtrayed before that eternal Spirit, who now opened the lips of the youthful prophet in the presence of the king. Who can meditate on this fact with a serious mind, and not join in the sentence of the Psalmist and the exclamation of the Apostle? "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart unto all generations." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and recompence shall be made him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

But these words teach us further, in a most impressive manner, the high supremacy of the word of God. To see this truth, let us rise by gradual steps from the view of the worldly mind to the elevation of this divine prophecy. How many families there are at this moment, each busied with its own petty cares and interests, and whose inmates look with contempt on the word of God, and suffer the Bible to remain uncared for and unexamined. Absorbed in their own schemes of pleasure, advancement, or worldly ambition, the lively oracles are to them almost unknown. Yet even these, however they may slight the word of God, look up, with deep interest and a worldly reverence, to the public affairs of their own nation. Those changes

which fix their attention, the court and the senate which they often regard with a secret idolatry, are themselves parts of a wider commonwealth, to which every single nation contributes its own share, its own interests and passions, the business and pleasures of its myriad population. These again, when all combined, are only the interests and pursuits of one fleeting generation. They are only the fluxion, of which the history of Christendom is the grand fluent ; the little ring of vegetation which one short year is adding to the mighty tree of European greatness.

Now this mighty whole, the collective history of the European nations, is here grasped, comprehended, and controlled, by one single verse of the oracles of God. We rise from the family to the state, from the state to the commonwealth of nations ; from the mighty commonwealth of one year to the Christendom of many ages. And here, when we have reached our highest point of worldly elevation, we find ourselves on the very lowest stair in the ladder of heaven ! Surely this truth is well adapted to abate the fever of worldliness ; and to raise the Christian above the atmosphere of earthly cares into a state of calm meditation and holy reverence. Such was the effect of a similar view on the soul of one of earth's proudest monarchs. "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing : and He doeth according to His will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth ; and none can stay his hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou ? "

There is indeed an unspeakable grandeur in this view of the Divine word, as controlling by one sentence the whole course of human affairs. Let us illustrate by an example, parallel in its nature. When "God said, Let there be light, and there was light ;" how infinite were the results of that one command ! What countless stars, from that fiat, derived their brilliance ! What innumerable flowers were clothed thereby with their beautiful colouring ! What a rich variety of glorious

landscapes, through successive years and ages, in every region of the earth, were summoned into life and beauty by that one sentence of creating power!

Now so it is also with the words before us. When the Spirit inspired the lips of the prophet with that one statement, "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another,"—a new element was thenceforth mingled with the whole course of future providence. This word of God, from that very hour, controlled the arms of warriors and the counsels of statesmen. It stood by, a silent witness of God's veracity and foreknowledge, at the bridal feasts of princes and kings. It forbade the schemes of proud ambition to ripen into success, and whenever they seemed nearest their final consummation, dashed them suddenly to the earth. The mighty empire of Charlemagne, by this one sentence was shattered into fragments. In later times, this divine sentence dashed to pieces, at Inspruck, the hopes of the ambitious emperor, scattered Spain's invincible navy to the winds and waves, and buried the countless legions of the mightiest conqueror that had risen for ages, deep beneath the Russian snows. And what wonder that one verse of God's word should have so mighty an operation? One verse of that word could ensure the descent of the Son of God from heaven. To confirm its faithfulness He willingly endured the cross and its bitterest agonies. "I say unto you, that this which is written must yet be fulfilled in me, He was numbered with the transgressors; for even the things concerning me have their consummation."

A further truth which ought to be impressed on our minds by these words of the prophecy, is the present reality of divine Providence. Now that eighteen hundred years have passed since the Lord ascended into heaven, the facts of the gospel are apt to leave a very faint impression on our hearts. We view them through the mist of ages, and fail to realize their deep and unchang-

ing importance to every generation of mankind. This prophecy is a divine help to deliver us from this snare, and to strengthen our hold on every message of the inspired word. For here we learn that our present condition, and the state of the world around us, is present to the eye of God, as when the Lord was dwelling here on the earth. The toes of iron and clay may be seen before our eyes. And thus the actual state of the European kingdoms is a daily pledge that the Lord is even now with his people. Whenever the Christian is ready to fall into the sin of the Jews, and to say in his heart, The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not; this prophecy rises up in witness against him. Here we learn, as by a direct voice from heaven, that all the plans and policy of statesmen at this present hour, are only part of the great scheme of wisdom and holiness which God had ordained, from the times of old, in his counsels of redemption. We are delivered from the temptation of resting in the present state of things, as if it were to last for ever. On the contrary, we learn that the same wisdom which fixed the times and the course of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and ancient Rome, is at this hour controlling the course of the broken kingdoms of the West, as a preparation for the glory which is near at hand. On every side, before us, and behind, in the records of the past, and the events of the present day, God himself is seen, judging in the earth; and we gain a deeper conviction of the great truth which the Holy Spirit has taught us, "He ruleth by his power for ever: His eyes behold the nations."

This is indeed one main practical benefit to be derived from these holy prophecies. They reveal to us God, ruling in the world. They take the Divine attributes out of the category of abstract and unreal doctrines, and make them become to us living, real, solemn, ever-present truths. The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, He who led his people through the wilderness, and wrought signs and wonders in the times of old, is present still. The toes of iron and clay, the divided

kingdoms of the West, depend each moment on His long-suffering, and when He speaks the word, the shadowy grandeur of the world will flee away and disappear, and the kingdom of Messiah will dawn upon our view in its promised glory.

There is indeed a striking analogy, in several particulars, between the history of modern Christendom, and the narrative of God's ancient people. When Israel was about to enter the land of promise, the remarkable injunction was given—"Notwithstanding the land shall be divided *by lot*:—according to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few." There was thus, in their first entrance on the land, a solemn testimony to the doctrine of a particular providence, and that the foreseeing wisdom and powerful control of God extends to the least as well as the greatest of human affairs.

Now it is remarkable that in the settlement of the Gothic tribes the same mode of division was frequently employed. Such was the course adopted, as mentioned already, (p. 108.) by the barbarous invaders of Spain. And when we reflect that out of this first division has grown up the whole system of European power, what a lesson does it teach us of the control of providence over the least and most trivial events of time! Had the rude lottery of the barbarians fallen out in a different way, the history of every kingdom of Europe would have undergone a great, and perhaps a total change. But he who "reigneth in the heavens over all from the beginning," comprehends in His deep and wondrous counsels even the falling sparrow, and the mote that dances in the sunbeam. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing of it is of the Lord." And never would the kingdoms of the West have assumed their actual form, nor these holy prophecies have been so completely fulfilled, unless an eye of infinite wisdom had presided over the sea of barbarian change. Under that supreme control, even the lottery of these ignorant warriors became rich with unconscious wisdom. It was framed into a mys-

terious link in that counsel of God's love, planned from all eternity, compared with which, the schemes of all the captains and statesmen of the earth are only like the caprice of childish folly, or the passing dream of a night vision.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE TEN KINGS.

The three first empires in these visions of Daniel have been shown to correspond, in all points, with the actual history of Babylon, Persia, and Greece. The rise, conquests, and dominion of Rome are described, with equal plainness, in the fourth kingdom. The vision of the Image carries on, in unbroken order, this correspondence between the prophecy and the actual course of secular history; and in the feet and toes of iron has prefigured two later stages of the Roman power, in its weakness and decay. The second vision introduces several fresh elements into the description which the prophecy affords of this later time. Up to this point the fulfilment of the symbols is distinct, clear, and full, a perspicuous testimony of the Divine foreknowledge. Does the light of history fail us here for the first time, and compel us to wait for some future event; or does it still guide us to a simple and clear fulfilment of these new features of the prediction? This is the important inquiry which has now to be answered.

The first of those facts, which this vision sets before us in the latter stage of the fourth empire, is the rise of ten kings, among whom its power is to be shared. This truth might be implied in the ten toes of the image; but the number of the parts was not expressly revealed. Now, however, a tenfold division is asserted four times, in a direct and open form. Are these kings, then, still future, or have they already risen?

The inquiry is one of the highest importance, and of the deepest practical interest to the Church. It involves the true or false interpretation of God's providence for many ages past. It brings the light of inspired truth to bear directly on the great events of European history, or else shuts it out, and leaves us in almost total darkness. The meaning of these kings involves also, by an inseparable connexion, the interpretation of the little horn, by which three of them are uprooted. If *they* have risen, the little horn has appeared also, and the Roman papacy is the only power which can fulfil the emblem. If these kings are yet to arise, that description must refer to some future Antichrist, and the Protestant interpretation has been a grievous wresting of the word of God. Where the issue is so important, we need the utmost reverence and caution, guarding on the right hand and on the left, lest any secret bias should turn us aside from the pure truth, and we should be guilty of either adding to, or taking from, the words of the prophecy. Let us inquire, with prayer to the fountain of all wisdom, whether the Spirit of God has not supplied us with abundant evidence, to fix the true sense of the prediction, and banish all doubt of its real application.

There are two expositions which may be at once rejected as demonstrably untrue. The first applies them, (as Professor Lee,) to Pagan or Christian emperors of Rome, ruling in succession. This is refuted by two plain arguments. These kings are contemporary, not successive. They are the ten toes of the image. They mingle themselves with the seed of men. They are the fellows or companions of the little horn. They receive power as kings one hour with the beast. And again, just as clearly, they follow after, and do not attend, the undivided state of the empire. On both grounds the opinion is clearly untrue.

But again, these horns have been expounded (as by Dr. Todd,) to be ten kings who are to arise in some future empire. This opinion also is refuted by all

those proofs, internal and external, which fix and establish the fourth kingdom to be the empire of Rome. It has therefore been abundantly refuted already: and the refutation will presently be more complete, when the objections of its advocates to the general view have been shown to be worthless.

Two important varieties of opinion remain, one of which asserts the past, and the other the future rise, of these ten kings; while both agree that their destined theatre is the Empire of Rome.

I. THE FUTURE RISE of the kings is maintained chiefly by the following arguments; their personal or individual character, their short continuance, and the great discordance among those who believe them to have risen already.

1. *The individual character* of these kings is, by some writers, treated almost as a self-evident truth. It is urged, as a clear proof of it, that in this chapter kings and kingdoms are mentioned in the same sentence, and therefore in contrast one to the other; and hence that 'expositors are greatly deceived, when they take upon them to expound of kingdoms what the prophecy has foretold of kings.'

The general argument has been elsewhere examined and refuted. (Elem. Proph. pp. 122—134.) It has been shown, both on grounds of reason and of Scripture usage, that the word *king* may be, and often is used, to denote a ruling dynasty or government, though held by many persons in succession. Two clear instances occur in Jeremiah, and one in Isaiah, even in literal prophecies; while in these symbolical visions, out of six instances where the application is unquestionable, in one case both meanings of the word coincide, and in all the others, it bears the *official*, not the *personal* sense. The confidence, then, with which the argument has been advanced, rests on a vacuum for its basis. The presumption, from Scripture usage alone, is entirely adverse to a strictly personal interpretation.

But is not the contrast between *kings* and *kingdoms* plain, at least in this vision ? Even this assertion will be found to be untrue. There is no contrast, but an evident interchange of the terms. The real distinction is between an entire monarchy and smaller governments. Let us make the induction complete, by comparing all the phrases which occur.

" These four beasts are four *kings* which shall arise out of the earth."

" The fourth beast shall be the fourth *kingdom* upon the earth."

" The ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise."

It is clear that the very same kingdom on which the alleged contrast must entirely depend, has been styled a *king*, only a few lines earlier in the vision. The variation, then, in the term, implies a lesson totally different from that which it has been supposed to prove. When the empire is viewed *actively*, as a conquering power, it is styled a *king ;* when *passively*, as undergoing partition, a *kingdom*. When the four main empires are viewed in their birth, they are called " *kings* that shall arise." And the origin of these broken parts of the fourth empire is described by the same phrase,—" the ten horns are ten kings that shall arise, and another shall arise after them." Instead of contrast between the four kings or kingdoms, and the ten, there is a marked and striking correspondence.

The symbol yields an argument still more decisive. The contrast between a wild beast and one of its horns bears no resemblance to the contrast between the millions of a vast empire, in many generations, and the person of one individual ruler. And the vision of the ram and the he-goat would thus also exhibit the gross anomaly of four kingdoms growing out of the person of one monarch. It is not the convenience of expositors, as some have asserted, but the plain evidence of reason and of the sacred text, which fixes the word *kings* to its official meaning.

2. The short continuance of these kings is a second reason alleged for their future rise. They are contemporary with the little horn, which is said to continue for a time, times and a half. This is assumed to denote three natural years and six months ; and it is inferred that the ten kings must arise within a few years from the Second Advent. This argument has been examined at length. (El. Proph. pp. 308—418.) The main assertion above, instead of being self-evident, is there shown to be opposed to every internal presumption which the Scripture offers, to fix the true meaning of the prophetic times. The objection, then, cannot maintain its own ground ; much less outweigh any direct arguments for the past application of these kings, drawn from the order and connexion of the prophecy.

3. The great variety in the lists of the ten kingdoms is made a third argument for the future rise of the kings. ' That the attempt to discover them has failed will be evident,' it is said, ' to any one who considers the great diversity in the lists of kingdoms that have been proposed. It is impossible to believe, that if the prophecy had been truly fulfilled in the Roman empire, this most remarkable feature could have remained in such vague uncertainty.' (Lect. Ant. p. 75.)

This objection, it is plain at once, rests merely upon human ignorance. When, on any subject, we are satisfied with counting opinions, instead of weighing, sifting and comparing them, we are on the high road to universal scepticism. And assuredly those who will hold nothing to be certain, till all the world, or even the church, are agreed upon it, will never form part of the vanguard of Truth, if even they may hope to be among her camp followers. In fact, every branch of theology or natural science might be turned, by this one maxim, into a heap of strange confusion. When the prophecy is closely examined, we shall find that the discordance has been exaggerated ; and that, so far as it exists, there is an adequate key to explain it, and a moral purpose which it serves to fulfil.

II. The arguments for the future rise of the ten kings are now proved to be insufficient. Let us next examine the direct proofs of their application to past events.

1. *The connexion of the parts in the Image* is the first proof. These ten horns are clearly the same with the toes of that image. But these are joined, without interval, to the undivided feet and legs of iron. The emblem, then, requires us to look for the ten kings immediately after the division of the Roman empire.

The interpretation teaches the same lesson. Nothing can be more plainly continuous than the whole account. The three first kingdoms are in strict historical sequence. The fourth, or Roman, is next described in its strength and vigour. Then the feet and toes are said to be mixed with iron and clay. Thirdly, the toes are mentioned by themselves. There is thus an intermediate stage, in which the empire is dissolving, not dissolved. But as soon as this dissolution into parts is complete, the ten toes have begun to rule, the ten kings have appeared. All is one unbroken, gradual succession. Since the state of Europe for twelve centuries past cannot answer to the legs or feet of iron, it must answer to the toes of the Image, and the ten kings have therefore appeared long ago.

2. *The order in which the horns are mentioned* confirms the same truth. Three times they are named ; and in each case, *after* the conquests and dominion of the fourth empire, and *at* or *before* the rise of the little horn. There is thus a three-fold witness to their true place in the series of events. The whole course of Roman power had already been parted into two chief stages, of iron strength, and of weakness and division. The rise of the ten kings is thrice fixed at the close of the first period, and the beginning of the second.

On this very point, however, plain as it is, a recent author has hazarded an objection. But the matter speaks for itself. It is enough to observe ; first, that the time when the horns *appeared* in the symbol is nowhere stated: next, that even when the parts of a symbol

appear complete from the first, as in the Image, the events are often successive in time ; and finally, that the mention of the horns three times in one exact order and no other, is the clearest mark imaginable of their true place in the historical series.

3. *The proportion of the prophecy* is a further confirmation. In this vision the divided state has twice, and in the last vision three times the space, which is allotted to the fourth empire before its division. In so brief a revelation of events on so large a scale, it is reasonable to expect some due proportion between the length of each period, and the space it fills in the Divine prophecy. Now, so far as this principle can guide us, the ten horns would last for ten or fifteen centuries.

4. The use of the term *kings*, is another presumption for the same view. Out of six instances, it has been observed already, one is neutral, and five *require* an official interpretation. This is no light argument for adopting it in this passage also.

5. *The interpretation of the horns of the he-goat* lends another powerful argument. These refer, as the words of the angel teach us very plainly, to the four kingdoms which rose out of Alexander's empire. Now the event here is exactly similar. The he-goat, like the leopard, denotes the Third Empire. In its later stage, four horns arise on it, and these denote four kingdoms. The fourth beast also, in its later stage, has ten horns ; and these, by the sameness of the emblem, must also denote ten kingdoms.

But it is objected that the phrase is different. The ten horns are declared to be *kings*, but the four horns, *kingdoms*. This, however, only confirms the argument. In neither of the two visions is a contrast maintained between the terms *king* and *kingdom*. But in both of them the symbol is exactly the same ; and in the second it plainly denotes four kingdoms, not four individuals rulers. In the first it therefore must denote ten *official*, not ten *personal* kings, or the harmony of the emblems will be quite destroyed. This will be plainer, if the

statements of the two visions are put in a comparative form.

1. The Leopard is "a *king* that shall arise out of the earth." vii. 17.
   It is also a third, since followed by a fourth, "*kingdom*." vii. 23.
   The He-Goat is the "*king* of Grecia." viii. 21.
   He also includes many kings, and is a *kingdom*. viii. 21.
   The four horns of the goat are "four *kingdoms*." viii. 22.
   They are also *kings*, being "for it," that is, for "the first king." viii. 22.
2. The Fourth Beast is "a *king* that shall rise out of the earth." vii. 27.
   It is also "the fourth *kingdom* upon earth." vii. 23.
   The ten horns from it are "ten *kings*." vii. 24.
   The ten toes, which are the same, are broken parts of a "kingdom." ii. 42.
   They are also ten *kings*—"in the days of these kings." ii. 43.

Nothing can well be more decisive than this comparison. The symbols in each case, are the same, a beast and its horns. The interpretation is just the same. The third empire, directly or indirectly, is twice called a *king*, and twice a *kingdom*. The fourth beast is also once called a *king*, and once a *kingdom*. The four horns of the third beast, directly or indirectly, are once named kings, and once kingdoms. And so also, the ten horns of the fourth beast, directly or indirectly, are twice named kings, and once kingdoms. The result of this comparison must be clear. To limit the ten horns to the person of ten individuals destroys the unity of the emblem, and sets aside the whole analogy of the inspired interpretations.

6. The correspondence of the main features of history is another proof that these kings have arisen. The fact is so plain that nothing but the strongest bias can

fail to perceive it. A remarkable break and division of the Roman empire has taken place, just as the prophecy announces it, midway in the history of the fourth and last kingdom. In the prophecy, four verses relate to the undivided kingdom, and eight or nine, to its state after the division. In history, the Roman empire remained unbroken for near six centuries, from Perseus to Valens; and its separate fragments have continued twelve or fourteen centuries longer. What resemblance can be more full and exact? The number of divisions in Western Europe was certainly about ten, and has continued nearly the same to the present day. Lastly, the history of these kingdoms has been linked more closely than that of any other nations, ancient or modern, with the progress of divine truth, and the destinies of the Church of Christ.

The future rise of these kings, it thus appears, is refuted by every argument which can be made to bear upon the subject. It destroys the continuity of both prophecies, which down to this point is clearly unbroken. It contradicts the usage of these visions in the meaning of the *kings;* subverts the natural sense and congruity of the emblem, and destroys the clear parallel in the case of the four eastern kingdoms. It violates all historical proportion, both in the parts of the vision, and in the prophetic numbers; and shuts out fourteen centuries of the church from all direct interest in these holy prophecies.

Let us next proceed to examine those minor details which involve more difficulty. The diversity of judgment upon these has impaired and weakened, with many Christians, the strong evidence of fulfilment which results from all the grand outlines of Providence. On a careful inquiry, however, these difficulties will melt away, and yield fresh evidence of the true meaning.

III. The exact meaning of the emblems has next to be ascertained. This will require a distinct an-

swer to be given to the following queries, which may naturally arise.

1. First, is the number *ten* definite and exact; or does it simply stand for a considerable number, as we speak familiarly of a dozen or a score? The latter view is taken by several writers, and would make the exposition easier. But, it must be rejected for the following reasons.

First, the number is mentioned four times in this vision alone. It is also clearly implied in the toes of the image. This harmony between the two emblems, and this repeated mention, which might easily have been avoided, form a clear mark that the number has a definite sense.

Next, the same number is mentioned seven times in the book of Revelation, and clearly refers there also to the same powers. This renewed mention of the number, so frequently given, and in a later prophet, shews plainly that the words must have a precise and strict interpretation. And besides, as all the other numbers in Daniel are definite in their meaning, there is no ground for making this a solitary exception to the general rule.

But this definite sense may on the other hand be strained too far, so as to create needless difficulties. The maxims of interpretation assumed may be too rigid. The list of the twelve tribes, for instance, appears in the word of God, in at least three various forms. Sometimes they are numbered from the twelve sons of Jacob. Sometimes Levi is excluded, and the two sons of Joseph replace their father. In a third list, Dan is excluded and Levi reappears. Amidst these varieties, however, the number twelve is always retained. Yet if we combine these various principles of enumeration, the number may be reduced to ten or raised to thirteen, and eight different lists be formed. There is nothing to exclude a similar variety in the reckoning of the ten kingdoms.

Again, it may be assumed that the number *ten* is to be permanent, from the rise of these kingdoms to their

overthrow. But of this there is no proof. If indeed ten *persons* were denoted, there would be an internal presumption for this sameness; yet the parallel in the case of the twelve apostles might, even then, serve to weaken or destroy its force. But since they are viewed as lasting for ages, all that can be required is to trace them at those points of time, in which the visions themselves define their number; and this is chiefly at their first rise, and at their fall.

2. Next, are these kings to be sought in the whole extent of the monarchy, or in the Western empire only? The question has been answered before. These empires, in the vision of the great image, are broken to pieces together. Hence they are viewed as co-existing after the rule of the three first is ended. They must therefore be distinct in place, no less than in time. The ten horns cannot occupy the same regions with the four horns of the he-goat; nor can the toes, any of them, form a part of the thighs of brass. These kings must therefore be found in the Western empire, and not in the Eastern, or Grecian monarchy. Thus Sir Isaac Newton: 'Seeing the body of the third beast is confined to the nations on this side the Euphrates, and the body of the fourth beast is confined to the nations on this side of Greece, we are to look for all the four heads of the third beast among the nations on this side the Euphrates; and for all the eleven horns of the fourth beast among the nations on this side of Greece. Therefore we do not reckon the Greek empire seated at Constantinople among the horns of the fourth beast, because it belonged to the body of the third.'

3. Are the ten kings, again, to be viewed as ruling dynasties, or as territorial divisions of western Europe? The letter of the prophecy seems decisive for the former view. Though *kings* and *kingdoms* are terms almost synonymous, they are not strictly the same. The term *king* cannot properly, even in its official sense, denote a district or territory, but simply a *ruling power*. The declaration that "ten kings shall arise" is distinct in kind

from the prediction that a territory should be divided into ten parts. It must refer properly to the rise of so many separate powers within the limits of the empire.

Again, three of these horns are said to be uprooted by the little horn. This expression does not accord with the territorial interpretation. The emblem clearly denotes the extirpation of three governments. The statement also in Rev. xvii. 12. loses all distinctness of meaning, if the kings there mentioned are defined merely by their local position.

The chief reason alleged for the opposite interpretation is its greater historical dignity and fulness, when the kingdoms are thus explained to continue from first to last. But this difficulty will be removed under the next inquiry.

4. It may be further inquired, Does the tenfold distinction of these kings cease at once after their first rise, or does each abide permanent? Or finally, do they admit of a partial change, and of successive substitution?

The first opinion is held by many who refer the kings to the Gothic or barbarian dynasties, which rose on the fall of the empire. They suppose the strictly tenfold division to cease when the three horns are uprooted. Thus Sir Isaac Newton observes:—'Some of these kingdoms at length fell, and new ones arose; but whatever was their number afterwards, they are still called the ten kings from their first number.' And Mr. Faber to the same effect. 'With the subsequent revolutions of the Western Empire, we have no concern; the ten *primary* kingdoms, founded by the ten distinct Gothic tribes, are alone the antitype of the ten Roman horns.'

This view seems wanting both in critical and historical completeness. This number ten is once implied, and four times expressly named in Daniel only, and seven times in the Apocalypse. This repeated mention, and that by two prophets, distant six centuries from each other, makes it very unlikely that the reference is to a period of only fourteen years. The ten horns, wherever they appear, seem to form one main character in the

second stage of the fourth empire. But it is a more decisive argument, that they are still named the ten horns near the close of the Apocalypse, at the time when they are to consume Babylon, or shortly before the millennial kingdom. This view, then, of the tenfold distinction, which regards it as merely for a moment, is a defective explanation, beside overlooking the grand outlines of Divine Providence.

It is the sense of this defect, no doubt, which has led several writers to define the ten horns as ten districts, continuing through all the later history of modern Europe. But this view has other difficulties of its own. First, it departs from the natural meaning of the phrase, "ten kings shall arise," and is inconsistent with the emblem of three uprooted horns. And further, the division is and must be, historically imperfect and defective. Let us take, as one of the most recent, that of Mr. Frere—Rome, Ravenna, Lombardy, Naples, Tuscany, France, Austria, Spain, Portugal, and Britain. This is historically true for no one era. Down to the time of Augustulus, the five first were one single kingdom, and had never become five independent governments. France, on the other hand, formed three kingdoms, and Austria had no distinct political existence. At the Lombard invasion, and before the times of Pepin, Naples and Ravenna formed one government, Lombardy and Tuscany another. At any later period, three of the ten had confessedly merged into one. This particular division, therefore, has never existed at any one period of history, and is consequently a very insufficient and unnatural basis for the whole interpretation of the kingdoms.

Again, at the present time, the list would equally fail. There are two kingdoms, at least, within the bounds of the Western Empire, which are entirely omitted, Sardinia and Belgium. A similar remark would apply to every intervening period. Historical fulness, then, by this means, is gained only by the sacrifice of historical exactness and truth.

One third hypothesis remains. The ten horns may

not be strictly permanent, but admit of partial change. Some may perhaps fall, or be blended, and then replaced by others. The tenfold character may thus be dominant through the whole, and appear distinctly at the beginning and close of their history, though not strictly maintained every moment. The following reasons may be given for this view.

First, it avoids the opposite difficulties of the *primary* and the *territorial* definition of the kingdoms. It recognizes the kings as *ruling powers*, not local divisions, three of which may therefore be uprooted. Yet it extends the fulfilment through the whole range of European history, instead of confining it to one corner of time. It also accounts for the same number, ten, being still found at the fall of Babylon.

Next, it has a direct warrant in the vision of the image. For these kings "mingle themselves with the seed of men, but shall not cleave one to another." This implies temporary and partial union, and then renewed separation. And these changes will of course alter the list of actual kingdoms.

Further, it results at once from the uprooting of three horns. For since after this the number is still ten, (Rev. xvii. 16.) the three uprooted horns must have been replaced. And unless they are replaced in the same instant, there will be an interval in which the number is not exactly ten. Both a deviation, then, from the precise number, and a change in the kingdoms, is consistent with the emblems, and directly implied in them.

Two distinct analogies, the only two which Scripture affords, teach the same lesson. In the twelve tribes, when Levi was separated for the service of God, Manasseh was introduced as a distinct tribe in his room. Again, when Dan is omitted, (Rev. vii.) perhaps in allusion to his idolatry, Levi is restored to complete the number. There are two distinct cases of substitution, yet the tribes are twelve in each instance.

The case of the twelve apostles is quite similar. When Judas fell by transgression, Matthias was chosen in his

room. The number twelve was maintained, though one of those first numbered had fallen away. These reasons all lead to the same conclusion, that some of the ten kingdoms may be merged into one, or be broken off from the rest; and yet are replaced by others, so that the same number re-appears at the close of their history as at the beginning. The variety of lists, which have been made such an objection to the truth of the fulfilment, is therefore easily explained, and is quite consistent with the words of the prophecy.

5. Are the ten kingdoms to be strictly confined to the Gothic invaders, or may powers like the Britons and the Greek exarchate be included? The former view seems preferred by the best living commentators; the latter by earlier authors, as Mede and Sir Isaac Newton. And I believe that these are correct in their judgment. The vision requires the horns to be homogeneous in this sense alone, that they are distinct and separate powers coexisting in the divided empire of the west. And this the Britons were before the Saxon invasion, not less than the Saxons afterward. Again, when the Greek empire had once lost its possessions in the west, and re-conquered a part of them, a part which clearly belonged to the body of the fourth empire; the exarchate so formed was a distinct power of the western commonwealth. We introduce then a technical distinction which the prophecy does not recognize, and which departs from the broad outlines of history, if we refuse to reckon it among the other division.

III. THE ACTUAL LIST OF THE TEN KINGDOMS has now to be determined, in the successive stages of the divided empire. This will not be a very difficult task, with the help of the previous remarks. A recent author, to disprove the fulfilment, has compiled a table with the list of twenty-nine writers. This may serve for a basis of the inquiry. Seventeen of these refer the ten kings to the Gothic dynasties of the fifth century, where we have first of all to discover them. Three of them agree in the list of Machiavel, given without

reference to the prophecy ; six adopt it with one variation ; one writer introduces two, and four others three changes. The list of Machiavel is as follows:

The Herulo-Thuringi,	The Visigoths,
The Ostrogoths,	The Sueves and Alans,
The Lombards,	The Vandals,
The Franks,	The Huns,
The Burgundians,	The Saxons.

The most usual list, perhaps, of living commentators, is that which omits the Huns, and introduces the Alans as a distinct power. This, however near an approach it may be to the truth, labours under two defects. These kingdoms or powers were never contemporary. The Heruli were extinct before the Lombards appeared. The Alans in Spain were extinct before either Odoacer or the Saxons arose. But if we forsake the principle of the kings being contemporary, the list might be increased to twice the number, and all precision will be lost.

Let us now refer to the direct voice of history, which will reduce the uncertainty within narrow limits. The following passages from Gibbon are extracted in the order of time.

A.D. 409—450. 'The thirst of rapine prompted the mercenary guards of the Pyrenees to desert their station, to invite the arms of the Sueves, the Vandals, and the Alani ; and to swell the torrent which was poured with irresistible violence from the frontiers of Gaul to the Sea of Africa. . . At length the barbarians, sated with rapine, fixed their permanent seats in the depopulated country. The ancient Galicia was divided between the Sueves and Vandals ; the Alani were scattered over the provinces of Carthagena and Lusitania ; and the fruitful territory of Boetica was allotted to the Silingi, another branch of the Vandalic nation.'

A. D. 419. 'The victorious Goths, forty-three years after they had passed the Danube, were established, according to the faith of treaties, in the second Aquitaine, a maritime province between the Garonne and the Loire. The Gothic limits were enlarged by the gift

of some neighbouring dioceses, and the successors of Alaric fixed their royal residence at Thoulouse. About the same time, in the last year of Honorius, the GOTHS, the BURGUNDIANS, and the FRANKS, obtained a permanent seat and dominion in the provinces of Gaul. The liberal grant of the usurper Jovinus to his Burgundian allies was confirmed by the lawful emperor, and the lands of the first or upper Germany were ceded to these formidable barbarians ; and they gradually occupied, by conquest or treaty, the two provinces which still retain the national appellation of Burgundy. The Franks, the valiant and faithful allies of the Roman republic, were soon tempted to imitate the invaders, whom they had so bravely resisted. Treves, the capital of Gaul, was pillaged by their lawless bands ; and their humble colony insensibly multiplied along the banks of the Meuse and Scheldt, till their independent power filled the whole extent of the second or Lower Germany. . . The ruin of the opulent provinces of Gaul may be dated from the establishment of these barbarians. . . . The odious name of conquerors was softened into the mild and friendly appellation of the *guests* of the Romans, and the barbarians of Gaul repeatedly declared that they were bound to the people by the ties of hospitality, and to the emperor by the duty of allegiance and military service.'

'Whilst Italy was ravaged by the Goths, and a succession of feeble tyrants oppressed the provinces beyond the Alps, the British island separated itself from the body of the Roman empire. The regular forces which guarded that remote province had been gradually withdrawn, and Britain was abandoned, without defence, to the Saxon pirates, and the savages of Ireland and Caledonia. The Britons assembled in arms, repelled the invaders, and rejoiced in the discovery of their own strength. The emperors wisely acquiesced in the independence of a remote province.'

On the accession of Valentinian II. fresh changes ensued. 'The western Illyricum was detached from the

Italian dominions. The emperor of the East acquired the useful dominion of the rich and maritime province of Dalmatia, and the dangerous sovereignty of Noricum and Pannonia, which had been filled and ravaged above twenty years by a promiscuous crowd of Huns, Ostrogoths, Vandals, and Bavarians.'

After the death of Attila 'the country of Dacia became the seat of a new power, erected by Ardaric, king of the Gepidæ. The Pannonian conquests, from Vienna to Sermium, were occupied by the Ostrogoths.' 'As soon as Odoacer had extinguished the Western empire, he sought the friendship of the most powerful of the barbarians. The new sovereign of Italy resigned to Euric, king of the Visigoths, all the Roman conquests beyond the Alps.'

'At this unhappy period, the Saxons fiercely struggled with the natives for the possession of Britain. Gaul and Spain were divided between the powerful monarchies of the Franks and Visigoths; and the dependent kingdoms of the Sueves and Burgundians. Africa was exposed to the cruel persecutions of the Vandals, and the savage insults of the Moors. Rome and Italy as far as the Danube, were afflicted by an army of barbarian mercenaries, whose lawless tyranny was succeeded by the reign of Theodoric the Ostrogoth.'

Thus at each of these two periods, seven powers are visible in the Transalpine regions of the empire; the Franks, Goths, and Burgundians, the Vandals, Sueves, Alans, and Britons; and afterwards, the Franks, and Burgundians, the Visigoths, Sueves and Vandals, the Britons and Saxons. Let us now observe the changes in the Cisalpine and Pannonian regions.

During the life of Attila the empire of the Huns cannot with reason be accounted a horn of the fourth beast. It was clearly a rival monarchy, and lay chiefly in the barbarian countries. On his death (A. D. 453,) it was subverted, and furious contests ensued among the separate tribes. The Huns, the Goths, the Gepidæ, the Sueves, Alans and Heruli, encountered at Netad in

Pannonia. Thus two kingdoms were added to the list, that of the Gepidæ, under Ardaric, and that of the Ostrogoths, which reached from Vienna to Sirmium.

The latter of these clearly fulfils every condition required in the ten horns. The claim of the Gepidæ may seem more doubtful. Yet Dacia had been for centuries a province of the Roman empire. The region they occupied is the same with Austrian Hungary, an undoubted part of the western commonwealth. There seems therefore a full warrant for including them. Nine horns will thus have appeared before the fall of the empire.

On the deposition of Augustulus, Odoacer assumed the title of king of Italy. The tenth and last kingdom was thus added to the list. The contemporary powers were, the Britons and Saxons, the Franks and Burgundians, the Visigoths, Sueves and Vandals; the Heruli, Ostrogoths and Gepidæ. All these were actually planted in the Roman provinces, when the empire fell. The Alans and Huns had previously disappeared as separate powers.

Let us now trace some of the principal changes. In 493, the Heruli were overthrown by Theodoric the Ostrogoth, and the kingdoms reduced to nine. Yet as a fresh Saxon kingdom had been formed, without a violent license the number might still be reckoned complete. About 530, the Lombards were invited by Justinian, and settled in Pannonia. The Vandals were soon after subverted, and the Ostrogoths in Italy replaced by the Greek exarchs, A. D. 554—568. At the same time, 511—568, France was parted into four divisions, Austrasia, Neustria, the kingdoms of Soissons and Burgundy. The Britons, after the death of Arthur, (A. D. 542.) may be reckoned extinct as a separate power. The Saxons, from their common origin, federal warfare, and subsequent union, may be counted as one kingdom. And hence the list will contain the four kings of France, the Visigoths, and Sueves, the

Greeks, the Lombards, the Gepidæ, and the Anglo-Saxons.

About 552, the Lombards and Avars combined and extirpated the Gepidæ. The Avars then possessed their territory, and the Lombards invaded Italy, and conquered the northern part, A. D. 568. In 585, the Sueves were destroyed or swallowed up by the Visigoths. From A. D. 561 to 613, France was again divided into four kingdoms. And these, with the Visigoths and Sueves, the Greeks, Lombards, Avars, and Saxons, still complete the same number. When the Sueves were extirpated, the kingdom of Scotland, under Aidan, began to appear as a separate power.

Under Pepin and Charlemagne the division became obscured, from two causes, the scourge of Saracen invasion, and the temporary reunion which was necessary for the nominal restoration of the Western empire. After the treaty of Verdun, that empire underwent a fourfold division. To these parts were added the exarchate in South Italy ; Venice, which had risen into a separate power in the north ; the small Spanish kingdoms of Navarre and Barcelona ; England, united now into a sole monarchy, and Scotland under Kenneth. 'The dukes, and at length the princes of Beneventum, survived the monarchy, and propagated the name of the Lombards. From Capua to Tarentum, they reigned near five hundred years over the greatest part of the present kingdom of Naples.' These again will complete a tenfold division.

From this time forward the actual list of the kingdoms may be seen in the following note,* at intervals of

* A. D. 860, Italy, Province, Lorraine, East France, West France, Exarchate, Venice, Navarre, England, Scotland.—Total 10.

A. D. 900. Germany, Burgundy, Lombardy, Exarchate, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Navarre, Oviedo.—Total 10.

A. D. 950. Germany, Burgundy, Lombardy, Exarchate, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Navarre, Leon.—Total 10.

A. D. 1000. Germany, Burgundy, Exarchate, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Navarre, Arragon, Normandy? Hungary?—Total 9 to 11.

about half a century. In several cases a doubt may arise whether a particular state should be included in the number. There are two main sources of this uncertainty. It is sometimes doubtful whether the kingdom can claim an independent sovereignty, from the complex and varying nature of its political relations. This is eminently true of the Italian states. The second source of doubt is found in the Protestant kingdoms after the Reformation. These are broken off from the religious

A.D. 1050. Germany, Exarchate, Venice, Norman Italy, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Normandy? Hungary?—Total 9 to 11.

A. D. 1100. Germany, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Lombardy? Hungary?—Total 9 to 11.

A. D. 1150. Germany, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Lombardy?—Total 10, or perhaps 11.

A. D. 1200. Germany, Naples, Venice, Lombardy, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary.—Total 11.

A. D. 1250. Germany and Naples, Venice, Lombardy, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary.—Total 10.

A. D. 1300. Germany, Naples, Venice, Lombardy, France, England and Scotland, Arragon and Sicily, Castile, Portugal, Hungary.—Total 10.

A. D. 1350. Germany, Naples, Venice, Switzerland? Milan? Tuscany? France, England and Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary. —Total 9 to 12.

A.D. 1400. Germany, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland? Milan? Tuscany?—Total 10 to 13.

A. D. 1453. Austria, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland? Savoy? Milan? Tuscany? —Total 11 to 14.

A. D. 1500. Austria, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Spain, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland? (Savoy? Milan? Tuscany?)—Total 10 to 13.

A.D. 1552. Austria, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Spain, Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland? Lombardy?—Total 9 to 11.

A. D. 1600. Austria, Venice, France, England? Scotland? Hungary, Spain and Naples and Portugal, Switzerland? Savoy, Tuscany, Holland?—Total 7 to 11.

A. D. 1648. Austria, Venice, France, Britain? Spain and Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland? Savoy, Tuscany, Holland?—Total 8 to 11.

A. D. 1700. Austria, Venice, Savoy, Tuscany, Naples? France, Britain? Spain, Portugal, Switzerland? Hungary? Holland?—Total 7 to 12.

A. D. 1750. Austria and Hungary, France, Savoy and Sardinia, Venice, Tuscany, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland? Naples? Britain? Holland? —Total 7 to 11

A.D. 1816. Austria, Bavaria, Wirtemberg? Naples, Tuscany, Sardinia, Lombardy? France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Britain? Switzerland?—Total 9 to 13.

community which existed previously among the European states, and hence a strong suspicion may arise that they are not to be included in the reckoning. To decide this point would require us to anticipate the following chapters. When allowance has been made for these two sources of uncertainty, the list will exhibit a remarkable prevalence of the tenfold division, from the first age even until now. Out of twenty eras, there are six in which the number of ten kingdoms appears distinct; and at every other period, with one exception, the same number lies within the probable limits, when we include or reject those of which the claims are uncertain.

The facts of history are therefore in complete accordance with the words of the vision. Amidst fluctuations so numerous and unceasing as almost to defy an exact numeration, the prophetic description remains prominent, and a tenfold division of the Western Empire reappears from time to time. The correspondence with the prediction is thus accurate and complete. For it must be borne in mind that two opposite features had equally to be fulfilled. The tenfold number was to exist; but there was also to be a frequent intermingling with the seed of men. In the actual outline of European history, both of these predicted features are alike conspicuous. A tenfold division, such as some have looked for, mathematical and unvaried, would frustrate one-half of the prediction; and would deprive the rest of all its freedom and moral grandeur. But now every part is alike accomplished. At the same time, by these partial changes in the list of the doomed kingdoms, the reproach of a stern fatalism, which otherwise would cloud the equity of Divine Providence, is rolled away. It becomes clear that, whatever may have been the guilt of a nation in former days, the way of repentance and life is still open; and that the strokes of Divine vengeance will fall upon no state, which has not first, by its iniquity and rebellion, bared its own neck to receive the predicted judgment.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE MORAL ASPECT OF THE TEN KINGS.

The interpretation of the Four Empires and of the Ten Kings which has now been given, results unavoidably from the connexion and order of the sacred prophecy. No other application can be maintained, without violently distorting both the visions, and rejecting every maxim of interpretation supplied by those parts which are manifestly fulfilled. The actual history of the world bears witness, at every step, to the accuracy of the prediction, and the truth of the fulfilment. From Belshazzar and Cyrus to Alexander, from the Macedonian and Syrian kings to their Roman conquerors, from Cæsar to Augustulus ; and thence through the floods of barbarian invaders down to the alliances of modern days, the prophecy faithfully sets before us, in unbroken course, the grand and majestic outlines of Divine Providence.

The objections which have been urged against this application, seem to arise chiefly, if not entirely, from the haste which is satisfied with first impressions, and is not careful to analyze, with caution and exactness, the prophetic language. Hence the vehement assertion that the ten horns must denote individual persons ; when the emblem itself, and every instance, without one real exception, which the symbolic visions supply, proves alike that the word *kings* has here an official, and not a personal signification. Hence again the assertion that the divided state of the iron kingdom must conti-

nue for a few years only ; when the express words of the vision require a space of two generations at least, and the law of proportion denotes a period of still longer duration. Hence the further assumption, that the time, times, and dividing of a time, must denote only three natural years and six months ; when apart from the events, there is an overwhelming amount of internal evidence that the prophetic times are to be interpreted on a far wider scale. In short, there is no one test of truth, separately taken, which does not concur to establish the past rise of these ten horns, and their application to the kingdoms of Western Europe. But there is one serious difficulty, of a moral kind, which has still to be removed ; one which has perhaps been the least noticed by expositors, and yet has led, more than any other, to doubt and hesitation among serious Christians.

The nations, then, of Western Europe, it may be objected, have constituted for ages the main part of the visible church. They have been linked together by a common profession of the true faith. Baptized with a holy baptism, they have been admitted into a share of all the high privileges of the Christian covenant. They are thus become, in the sight of God, a holy people ; and invested with a more honourable character than were even the Jews of old. In the bosom of these nations the saints of God, in countless numbers, have been reared for their eternal inheritance. Most of them bear, in their very constitution, deep traces of the victory of our faith, and profess to be founded on the word of the living God. How then can these kingdoms, honoured so highly, and incorporated into the Church of Christ, be described by an emblem so hateful as the horns of a devouring wild beast ? Especially how can their character be reconciled with that later description in another prophecy, which denounces them as abettors of Antichristian wickedness, and confederate against the Lamb ? Is not this view opposed to all moral propriety and truth ? In times when contempt of dignities abounds so fearfully, does it not lend a handle to wickedness, and

encourage the spirit of rebellion, by seeming to offer it a direct warrant in the word of God ?

It is doubtless some secret reasoning of this kind, which has obscured from many Christians the direct and simple evidence of the true application. And hence it is of great importance to examine it calmly, and to remove the false basis on which it rests. The moral evidence for the interpretation already given, will then be not less convincing and full than the proof which is drawn from the sequence and course of the prophecy.

The true source of the difficulty, here as elsewhere, is the adoption of hasty impressions, without a careful and inductive search into the full testimony of the word of God. Our natural dimness of spiritual vision will always tend to obscure our sense of the actual evil in the states of Christendom, and in the visible Church of Christ. Now if, besides this, we strain the emblems to an intensity of meaning which the Scriptures do not warrant ; and imagine that they portend grotesque and monstrous forms of unmingled wickedness ; by this double error we may shut our eyes against the clearest evidence. The prophecy and history may thus be made to seem at variance, when the real correspondence between them is complete and entire. There are three truths which remove the whole difficulty, and turn it into a fresh evidence for the fulfilment of the visions.

Let us first determine, by the light of Scripture itself, whether the emblem of the horns requires in its objects pure and unmingled wickedness ?

On this point we are not left to vague and loose conjectures. The emblem does not stand alone. It forms part of one continuous series in the prophetic imagery. These ten horns belong to the fourth beast ; and three others before it have appeared on the scene. The toes of iron are the last in succession of the various powers which compose one great and imperial image. There may, doubtless, be shades of distinction between the various parts. The moral degradation may increase

from age to age, or be modified by new and unexpected causes. But still, so far as the emblem can be a guide, the parallel is complete. The moral character of the ten horns, as drawn from the vision, will be most accurately known, if we examine the history of the three first kingdoms, and of the earlier stage of the fourth empire.

Let us begin with the first monarchy, that of Babylon. As the toes of the Image, and the horns of the fourth beast denote these ten kingdoms, so, in like manner, the head of gold and the lion-like beast signify the Babylonian empire. The analogy of the symbols is complete.

Now it is true that this empire is described in the word of God as under a predominant power of evil, proud, persecuting, and idolatrous.

But are these evil characters unmitigated and entire, without any relief from brighter and happier features? The prophecies of Jeremiah, and the history of Daniel himself both teach us a different lesson. There were gleams of light even amidst the darkness of Babylon. Amidst the prevailing cruelty we meet with refreshing instances of kindness; and amidst the reigning idolatry, some traces of real piety, and the acknowledgment and worship of the true God. When the sin and obduracy of the Jews was at its full height, how remarkable was the contrast in the spirit and conduct of the Babylonian chieftain! Jer. xl. 1—5; xxxix. 11—14. "Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm, but do unto him as he shall say unto thee." "And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, The Lord thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place. Now the Lord hath brought it, and done according as he hath said, because ye have sinned against the Lord, and not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which were upon thy hand. If it

seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come, and I will look well unto thee ; but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear : behold, all the land is before thee ; whether it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go." These are not the words of a dragon, or beast of prey, but like those of a true worshipper of the living God.

But the history of Nebuchadnezzar, as recorded by Daniel himself, still more fully illustrates the same truth. Let it be remembered that the whole prophetic period of Babylon was seventy years, and that forty-five of these belonged to Nebuchadnezzar alone. And yet that monarch himself, so far as we may infer from the sacred history, died a true convert, his pride abased and his spirit changed by the wonderful discipline of heaven. His last recorded action is a noble ascription of praise and thanksgiving to the true and living God. The decree with which his life is closed rivals the apostolic writings in its benediction of peace, and the sublime fervour of its adoration. And thus, while the seventy years' empire has for its emblem a wild beast of prey, the king who for two-thirds of that period was its ruler seems to have died a sincere convert to the God of Israel. This fact proves very clearly that these emblems, however significant of evil, do not imply, in the kingdoms or their rulers, unmingled wickedness. There may be gleams of light in the moral darkness. The prevailing features of idolatry and persecution may be relieved by examples of moral excellence, and even of true faith and piety, like stars amidst the gloom of the surrounding firmament.

In the sacred history of the second empire, the same truth is conspicuous. Who can read the decree of Cyrus, the affectionate alarm of Darius for the safety of the prophet, or the proclamation of Artaxerxes, and not feel how different is the spirit they breathe from that which the symbol of the bear seems naturally to imply ? The emblems of the prophecy represent the evil, for the sake of warning, in its full and concentrated form. But

the details of the sacred history relieve the picture by the earnests of redemption ; and bright traits of humanity and conscience, and sometimes of living faith, stand out in double lustre from the dark background of national corruption and crime.

The same lesson re-appears in the case of the fourth empire. It has been seen already how fully the Roman power answered to the characters of the fourth beast ; dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly, which brake in pieces and stamped the residue with its feet. Yet, in the details of the New Testament how many features of mitigation appear ! It was a Roman centurion who drew from our Lord the admiring sentence, " I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Another Roman centurion, at the foot of the cross, amidst the mockery of the Jews, did homage to the Redeemer, saying, " Truly this man was the Son of God." It was Cornelius, the Roman centurion, who was full of prayer and alms-deeds, a devout man, and one that feared God continually ; and by whom the Gospel first dawned on the Gentile nations. Almost everywhere in the Acts, when the Roman governors appear in contrast with the Jewish zealots, the advantage, in moral excellence or uprightness, rests clearly with the former. The same feature is continued even to the close of the sacred narrative, in the courtesy which Julius, another Roman centurion, bestows on the holy Apostle in the time of his distress. Yet the power of which these courteous, and even devout centurions were the agents, is described in these visions under the fierce and hateful emblem of a wild beast of prey.

The conclusion to be drawn from these precedents is simple and clear. The ten horns imply, doubtless, in the powers to which they refer, the prevalence of sin, idolatry, or worldly corruption. But the emblem does not exclude a large mixture of natural or moral excellences, nor even the existence, in many individuals, of true faith and living obedience. In those very kingdoms or states to which the words apply, there may be

many a Julius, courteous, affable, kind, and endued with social virtues ; many a Cornelius, faithful, devout, and honourable, even in the sight of God ; many a Sergius Paulus, who welcomes the message of the gospel, and supplies a new name and trophy of honour to the apostles of Christ. We must renounce every precedent which the inspired history sets before us, if we wait for some power of unmixed blasphemy and wickedness, before we recognize the vision as truly fulfilled.

We must advance, however, a step farther, in order to remove this moral stumbling-block, and vindicate the truth and consistency of the interpretation. It may still be thought that the exceptions which the symbol allows are not wide enough to reconcile its character with the actual privileges and profession of the Christian nations. There is a second truth, still more vital, which removes the whole difficulty, and restores the interpretation into full harmony with the other statements of God's word.

The visions of Daniel, it must be carefully observed, are not the whole of that light which the scriptures furnish on the state and character of the Christian kingdoms. They are a supplement and reserve of truth, and were designed to reveal their message, only after a time. In two successive visions we are told of those parts which refer to the Christian era, that they were closed and sealed till the time of the end. The phrase, in the abstract, may denote all the times of the gospel ; but still it points, with most emphasis, to the latter times of the Christian dispensation. Hence these prophecies may be viewed as a sacred codicil to the New Testament. They are a supplement to other and more general instructions, which were to be given, previously, to the church of God.

What then is the nature of those general instructions which are elsewhere supplied to us, on the privileges of Christian nations, and the office and character of their rulers ? In the gospels, and still more, in the epistles,

we find an abundant answer. There we have the privileges of the visible church and its members set before us in the strongest terms. There are, it is true, many warnings interspersed, against confounding the visible profession with the deep and heartfelt reception of truth; many premonitions of the actual working, and future growth, of a fearful and dangerous apostasy from the faith. But still, the general tone of address to the visible churches is one of hope, encouragement, and love. The titles and promises which apply to the true believer are applied freely to professing communities of Christians, and are showered upon the churches of Christ, like the free air and sunshine of heaven. The forms of logical exactness and minute definition seem to be purposely withheld; and it is often left uncertain, whether the terms employed are used in a lower or higher sense, whether they apply to the whole visible body, or only to the faithful members. Encouragement, invitation, and hope, not separation and exclusion, are the features which everywhere prevail. It is only in extreme cases, and then with weeping and tears, that any of the baptized are solemnly excluded, even for a time, from the pale of salvation.

The lesson, with regard to rulers and governors, is still more impressive and full. At the time when St. Paul wrote, the fourth beast of the prophecy was in the height of its dominion, and Nero, one of the most cruel of the Roman emperors, was on the throne. Yet even then, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the apostle gave that exhortation to the Church. "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour."

Now if such honour and reverence were to be rendered, for the sake of their office, to the worst of heathen emperors, who, in their prophetic character, were the heads of the last and fiercest wild beast, how much

more would the same duty apply, under Christian kings and princes? For these would naturally come within the parallel of the kings of Judah, and thus all the examples of obedient reverence in the Old Testament would confirm and deepen the direct instructions of the apostle. So that the chief danger would here be of an opposite kind. Those who drew their maxims of conduct from the apostolic writings alone, would be liable to confound a Christian profession with true conversion and faith, and to stretch their obedience to governors even to a sacrifice of their own conscience; rather than to despise government, or treat the visible Church as a synagogue of Satan.

We find, on searching ecclesiastical history, that this danger actually arose. Christians sank more and more into a superstitious trust in external communion with the Church, and a blind and slavish subjection of conscience to their civil and spiritual superiors. It was needful that the word of God should provide some antidote for this evil. Some contrasted exhibition of truth was required, when corruption and superstition prevailed, to restore conscince to its just supremacy, and hinder it from being crushed into extinction, even by that holy name, the Church of God, and the duty, so clearly enjoined, of submission to the governors whom He has ordained and appointed.

Now these visions of Daniel supply the scriptural counterpoise which was needed, in order to restore the balance of truth, and deliver the conscience from undue and fatal thraldom to the authority of men. They are not the exclusive description of these Christian kingdoms, and of that period of history to which they belong. They are the supplement to a contrasted view of the same kingdoms, which may be drawn from simpler and plainer parts of the word of God. The epistles present to us the visible church, in its pure idea, in the high calling and privileges of its members; and exhibit Christian rulers in their sacred office and dignity, as the vicegerents and ministers of God. The prophecies, on the other hand,

reveal the corruption of that Church and of Christian governments, under emblems of equal power. They were sealed also till the later times of the Church, that the antidote might be given only when the evil had become fully manifest,—when the ordinances of God had become deeply profaned ; they would otherwise have been a snare and bondage to true Christians, instead of a help and comfort ; a source of fatal delusion, instead of a guide to saving truth. The truth revealed in these prophecies was designed to remedy this evil. They are simply then the reverse of a brighter picture, the safeguard against a fearful and dangerous perversion of the high privileges of the Christian name.

True Catholicity, as a term of distinction, involves two main principles. The first is, a deep and lively sense of the high and unspeakable privileges of the visible Church of Christ. The second is that charity, which forbears, except in extreme cases, to antedate the time of judgment ; or to pronounce, even in thought, against individuals or communities, a decisive sentence of exclusion from that holy fellowship. This is the spirit which reigns in the epistles of the New Testament. True Protestantism, in like manner, has two main pillars on which it rests. The first is the wide difference, in the sight of God, between the greatest external privileges, and the inward renewal of the heart unto holiness. The second is the fact that there exists, under Christian names, a wide and dangerous apostasy from the purity and power of the Christian faith. These truths are found in many warnings of the epistles themselves, but it is in these prophetic visions that they are most clearly and plainly revealed.

These remarks supply a full answer to the frequent objection, that the usual interpretation of these visions destroys the perpetuity of the Church, and makes its existence impossible in the middle ages of European history. It is thought incredible that such descriptions could apply, where there was a true Church of Christ, without a formal and entire separation of the opposite elements.

How could any one be at once a witness of Christ, and a servant of the little horn ?

Here, also, the objection is disproved by the plainest analogies of the word of God. What is more corrupt than the flesh ? What more holy than the blessed Spirit ? Yet these two adverse powers meet in the bosom and the experience of every true Christian. The same apostle who declares of himself—"I am carnal, sold under sin," tells us also, "The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." The spirit of unbelief tends indeed continually to obscure our view, both of human sin and of Divine goodness. The word of God, on the contrary, deepens our views of the evil of sin, while it exalts and magnifies the excellence of God's imparted grace. But it further describes these two principles as blended together in the same communities, nay, in the same bosom ; so that no eye but that of God himself can fully discern and separate them from each other. The same truth will clearly apply to these prophetic kingdoms. The high and holy privileges of the visible church may coexist with foul apostasy and most grievous corruptions. And yet for long ages the separation may be incomplete ; and no eye but that of Omniscience may be able fully to discern the remnants of truth and holiness from the various forms of iniquity and worldliness by which they are surrounded.

III. The sole reason, then, which could warrant us to reject the application of the ten horns to the kingdoms of Europe, must be, not the admitted truth that those kingdoms may be viewed in a contrasted light, as parts of the visible Church ; but the assurance that no such corruption or apostasy prevails among them as might be fully and truly described by those emblems of the prophecy.

Now this is plainly untrue. No one of any spiritual discernment can compare the history of Europe for the last fourteen centuries with the holy precepts of the

Gospel, and not see an amount of evil which scarcely any emblem could be vivid enough to pourtray. Let us remember that the living God is no respecter of persons, of outward appearances and shows, whether those of worldly pomp and grandeur, or of holy names and titles in the Church of Christ. He judges according to the truth, the real state of every heart, the actual course and tenor of human conduct. Let us bear in mind, also, that the Gospel brings with it a vast increase of responsibility to those who hear it; and that every sin among Christian nations is far more aggravated than in heathen lands. Let us remember, finally, that the only standard of judgment is the law of God; and that whatever falls short of the love of God with all the heart, and the perfect love of all men, goes to increase the vast amount of the sins of Christendom under the light of the Gospel. Once let us combine these maxims, which are infallible truths, and apply them as a touchstone to European history; and the emblems of the vision will not appear too strong. It is hard for those who are themselves surrounded by an atmosphere of worldliness, who breathe a tainted air, to read the truth in the light of heaven, or to understand the deep abhorrence of the Saviour for the sins and apostasies by which His holy religion has been profaned.

One single allusion ought indeed to convince us that views, the most contrasted, may meet and combine in the description of the Christian nations in the word of God. The passage on which the pretensions of the visible Church have been mainly reared, even to a blasphemous height, is that remarkable address to Simon Peter—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church: and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Yet within a few verses that same Apostle is addressed in the most opposite, and even awful terms, by the very title of the prince of darkness—"Get thee behind me, Satan." So that even if the high pretensions of the Church of Rome had a real warrant in that striking promise, this

would be no security to her, as these words of Christ plainly show, that the emblem of the little horn might not fully describe her actual condition.

The language of the prophets to the Jewish nation is another precedent of the same kind. No terms can be stronger than those which are sometimes used to describe the privileges and honours of the chosen people. At other times, they are openly called Amorites and Canaanites, Sodom and Gomorrha. Now if the corruptions of the Christian nations have been similar to those of the Jews, as no thoughtful observer can deny, as deep in their stains, but wider in their extent, and heavier in their aggravations; there can be no reason why titles of shame, like those openly fixed upon the Jews, might not, under these emblems, be given to the Christian Church.

For what is the charge, when strictly examined, which these symbols imply? It is that the nations of Europe, after assuming the Christian profession, will rival the worldliness, ambition, and idolatry of the three first empires, and of Rome in its heathen form. And is not this a fact which all historians, by the mere instinct of historical fidelity, recognize in almost every page? Who thinks of tracing the conduct of Valentinian, Pepin, or Charlemagne; of the Conqueror, or the Othos, or Charles the Fifth, to maxims and motives distinct in kind from those of Alexander, Scipio, or Cæsar? And if we clear away the petty and puerile dreaming of Jesuit apologists by the broad light of common sense and historic truth, what substantial difference can be found between the idolatries of the first and of the tenth century? Let us hear the words of Sismondi, a most calm and impartial historian, in his history of the Italian Republics.

'Paganism had re-entered, whole and entire, into the religion which seemed to have annihilated it. The Christian religion, which might on several counts have been accused already of turning back towards Polytheism, found itself changed, by a last step, into idola-

try properly so called. The images, the statues, were recognized as having in their very nature something divine. They were honoured for themselves, independent of the object they represented, more perhaps than had ever been done among the Pagans. . . . The Moslems lavished on the Christians the reproach of idolatry ; they turned against them all the arguments which the ancient apologists had used to attack the Pagans ; and this controversy was so much the more humiliating for the orthodox, as their profession of faith formed an evident contrast with their practice ; and the hatred of the name, Idolater, was not extinct in them, at the very time when they most richly deserved it.'

Now since the moral features of the nations of Christendom, in their grand and conspicuous outlines, had become the same for centuries with those of the heathen empires before them, no reason can be given why the like emblems should not be used to describe them in the word of God. It is vain to fight against the clear evidence of facts and the concurrent witness of prophecy, by holy names, or ecclesiastical fictions. The privileges of the visible Church may be in themselves great, manifold, and glorious ; but in God's sight they will never hide out the truth, nor reverse the plain and affecting reality of abounding idolatry and sin. " The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight ; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

If such, then, was for many centuries the actual state of Christendom, there was a double reason why it should be faithfully pourtrayed in the Divine word. Open and undisguised evil is far less dangerous than that which is secret and unsuspected, or which palliates and conceals its foulness under the covert of holy names and sacred titles. The sheep of Christ can need but

few directions to warn them against open blasphemers. But if the system of thought and practice, in lands professedly Christian, should become corrupt and idolatrous, and authority, under the name of Christ, be arrayed against Christ himself; if a power was to arise, with all the guilt of idolatry and blasphemy, but most skilfully disguised, which should combine these elements of corruption into one compact system, and forge the seal of heaven to attest its truth; and thus, with every deceit of unrighteousness, claim the submission of all the flock of Christ under peril of temporal and eternal ruin, while it should trample under-foot the commands of the Saviour; there would then be far more need for a Divine caution, far more occasion for prophecy to hold out its beacon light to the Church. The more subtle the delusion, and the more closely it was entwined with the truth, and blended with holy things, the more would this spear of Ithuriel be needed to detect the mystery of its iniquity, and to unmask the lurking and unsuspected foe. And further, since the word of prophecy is designed for believers in every generation, those evils which keep themselves alive, by their subtlety, with growing strength from age to age, would require exposure far more than those, however intense, which by their open and direct blasphemy hurry themselves, after a few months of sufferance, into final ruin. And thus every reason of moral propriety, no less than of critical truth, compels us to reject the application of the ten horns to some future infidel kings, to endure for a few months only, and to apply them, along with the little horn, to that system of spiritual delusion which has practised and prospered for ages among the kingdoms of the West.

IV. There is a further objection often urged against the fulfilment of the vision, and alluded to before; which, on closer inquiry, illustrates its practical worth, and the great moral purpose for which this holy pro-

phecy was given. This is, the doubt or uncertainty in the actual list of the ten kingdoms.

Now if the sole object of prophecy were to furnish evidence of God's foreknowledge, the objection would doubtless have some weight, however small. The more precise and mechanically exact the interpretation, the better, in that case, would it fulfil its design. The climax of its perfection would be, to offer beforehand the names of those states, rulers, and kings, who should fulfil the emblems of each vision.

But when these prophecies are viewed in their moral aspect, the standard of comparative excellence is entirely changed. The excess of minute, distinct, and mechanical details might then be not less injurious than entire vagueness and obscurity. If rulers and states, specified by name, were marked out as involved in a curse, and doomed to a sure destruction, an air of cold fatalism would be given to the warning, and would destroy at once all its moral force and impressiveness. The more limited and minute the prediction, as when we pass from an empire to a minor kingdom, from many generations to one, and thence to the person of individual rulers, the more conspicuous this evil would become. Sin would appear the fatal result of a Divine appointment, not the voluntary fruit of human perverseness. What was gained in the superior distinctness of the prophecy, would be more than balanced by the paralyzing effect upon the consciences of men. The course of God's wise and gracious providence would seem changed into a blind fatality; and every wicked nation, or apostate ruler, would seem like another Œdipus, hurried against his will, and without a choice, in the downward road of perdition. In harmony with this remark, we find only three persons mentioned by name in the predictions of Scripture before their birth. Solomon, Josiah, and Cyrus; and in each of them, not in connexion with sin and judgment, but with promise or commendation.

That feature of the prophecy, therefore, which has been urged to disprove its fulfilment, is only a fresh

mark of the wisdom by which it has been adapted for a warning to the church. The application of the Fourth Empire to Rome is clearly defined. The period of its dissolution into separate kingdoms is equally plain in the history. The number of those divided kingdoms was evidently about ten, and thus confirms the true application, since all the broader features of the vision appear conspicuous in the annals of Rome. In the lists of these kingdoms, however, there is some variation, and several questions which may be raised, both in earlier and later times, as to their precise limits. But this fact, while it scarcely lessens the full evidence of the prophecy, adds greatly to its moral power. It breaks the spell of fatalism, and allows moral tests to be introduced, and moral warnings to exert their full authority. So far as any state falls into the tide of worldly corruption, buries itself in idolatry, and persecutes the witnesses of Christ, the brand is fixed deeper on its forehead; and the prophecy, like the angels in the last day, will grasp and apprehend the criminal for judgment. But there is no clear proof from the vision that the ten horns are not to be distinguished, rather by their allegiance and subjection to the Little Horn, than by their local position. And if that emblem denote the Roman Papacy, as will be presently shewn, a conclusion would thus follow of the highest practical moment. If any nation, whatever its local situation, stands aloof from the paths of worldly ambition, clears itself from the idols of Christendom, shakes off the yoke of usurped authority, disclaims the maxims and the practice of persecution, and stands forth a protesting witness against the corruptions of the faith and the confederacies of evil; then, clearly, the warning passes over it, like the destroying angel over the tents of Israel; and the promises to "the righteous nation that keepeth the truth" become its shield and its safeguard. The supposed defect of the interpretation is thus really one part of its moral excellence and completeness. The severe and earnest warning is suspended over the commonwealth of nations; but alights upon

each, only when idolatry, persecution, and ungodliness, fix their brand more plainly on its forehead, and mark it out for judgment. Britain, for instance, there can be little doubt, was once in the number of these kingdoms. But there need be as little doubt, that for three centuries it has been withdrawn from the company of those powers which have yielded to the dominion of the Little Horn. And it may be equally true, that covetousness, national indifference to the truth, and the reviving tide of superstition, threaten to carry us into the vortex once more, and expose the nation to a second and worse apostasy; which may God, of his infinite mercy, avert from our land.

To conclude these remarks, the difficulty which has been felt in the application of the ten horns to kingdoms which have already appeared, yields, on a closer examination, fresh evidence of its truth. It shews how wisely the Divine warning has been adapted to meet the actual danger of the Church. The emblem, as appears plainly from all the examples of Scripture, does not imply unmingled and supernatural wickedness. The view of the Christian kingdoms here given to us is also a supplement to another, and a contrasted view, which plainer parts of God's word have previously supplied. The strong declarations, which are made elsewhere, of the authority and dignity of ecclesiastical teachers and civil rulers, would tend, in ages of corruption, to deaden and paralyze the conscience of the Church, if this Divine antidote had not been provided to meet and resist the evil. Thus, on the right hand and on the left, the people of Christ are fenced and guarded from the snares of the deceiver. If they are prone to indulge the license of self-will, they are met by the broad and plain lessons of reverence for God's ministers, the governors whom He has ordained, and the high privileges of the Church of Christ. If they are prone to surrender their conscience blindly to prevailing corruptions, and to renounce their personal standing as responsible to God for their own conduct, they are shielded by these special warn-

ings, which reveal the corruption of Christendom and its rulers, and teach the Christian that, if he would deliver his soul, he must be a protesting witness against the worldliness and idolatry that surround him. The very uncertainty which has been felt in attempting to define exactly these ten kingdoms, fulfils a moral purpose of the highest moment. It speaks to every nation with a loud voice of warning, as Jonah to Nineveh, or St. Paul to the Romans, "Thou standest by faith; be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee." Fear, and the pit, and the snare, it is true, may be in prospect. But faith in Christ, and allegiance to the pure gospel of grace and holiness, can rescue states as well as individuals, from impending judgment. Nay, as in the case of Levi, it has power to convert the threatening into mercy, the seeming judgment into the reality of blessing. The details of prophecy may be more or less distinct; but righteousness and equity, mingled with grace, must ever reign supreme in all the counsels of God. His message to the kingdoms of Europe is still the same as to Israel of old. "Behold, as the clay is in the hand of the potter, so are ye in my hand, saith the Lord. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up, and to pull down and to destroy; if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." The nation that receives the gospel, maintains the pure worship of God, and brings forth the fruits of holiness, is safe, though heaven itself were to pass away. But where the gospel is rejected for the inventions of man, and idols set up by the side of Jehovah, or open ungodliness tramples under-foot the name of Christ,—there a seal, not of the Spirit of God, but of Satan, is stamped on the forehead, and marks out the unhappy nation as among the doomed kingdoms, and already trembling on the verge of destruction.

CHAPTER X.

THE RISE OF THE LITTLE HORN.

DAN. VII. 8.—"I CONSIDERED THE HORNS, AND, BEHOLD THERE CAME UP AMONG THEM ANOTHER LITTLE HORN, BEFORE WHOM THREE OF THE FIRST HORNS WERE PLUCKED UP BY THE ROOTS."

19, 20.—"THEN WOULD I KNOW THE TRUTH OF THE FOURTH BEAST, . . . AND OF THE TEN HORNS THAT WERE IN HIS HEAD, AND OF THE OTHER WHICH CAME UP, AND BEFORE WHOM THREE FELL."

24.—"AND THE TEN HORNS OUT OF THIS KINGDOM ARE TEN KINGS THAT SHALL ARISE: AND ANOTHER SHALL ARISE AFTER THEM; AND HE SHALL BE DIVERSE FROM THE FIRST, AND SHALL SUBDUE THREE KINGS."

THE fulfilment of these sacred visions has now been traced, from Nebuchadnezzar, through Cyrus and Alexander, Antiochus and Scipio, Pompey and Cæsar, down to the times of Valens and Augustulus. The changeful alliances of the European kingdoms, their tenfold number, and the main outlines of their character and history, carry on this prophetic narrative to the last age of the church. The events of the fifth century, and the powers which then arose in the west, have been found exactly to agree with the inspired prediction. The prophecy now reveals to us a further event, more remarkable than the former. In the latter stage of the fourth empire, while it is parting into ten kingdoms, another power is to arise by which three of these are uprooted. This power was to be distinct in kind from the rest, and of far higher pretensions. Its mouth speaks great things, and its look is more stout than that of its fellows. It claims authority over times and laws, and over the saints of God.

The course of the prophecy leaves us here scarcely

any choice in our judgment of its meaning. This unknown and mysterious Power was to arise amid the ten kingdoms of the west, soon after they appeared. It was to have a distinct seat and place in the body of the fourth empire. At the same time it was to claim a prophetic character, and to exert a direct or indirect sovereignty over all the surrounding kings. These features can be found in no power, whether past or future, but the Papacy of Rome. Let us briefly review those marks of correspondence which reveal themselves on a more general survey.

The little horn arises amidst the ten horns of the fourth beast: and the Roman see is placed in the midst of the temporal states of Western Europe, which grew on the ruins of the old empire.

The little horn rises at, or just after the time when these kings appear. The spiritual claims of the papacy began just before, its temporal dominions were acquired soon after, the fall of the Western empire, and the barbarian settlements.

The horn in part resembles the others, being like them a horn of the beast. In part it differs from them, since it has eyes and a mouth. The papacy is one among many temporal states of Europe. It is the only one which claims a spiritual authority and universal dominion.

The horn is small in size. The papal dominions have always formed one of the smallest states in Europe.

The eyes and mouth of the little horn give it a close resemblance to a head of the beast. The papacy has ever claimed a supreme dominion over the whole of the western kingdoms.

The little horn has further a human and articulate voice. Its mouth speaks great things. So also, the pretensions of the Roman see are distinct in kind from those of temporal rulers. It claims a character as far superior to theirs, as man to the irrational beasts, and professes to be an infallible interpreter of the will of God.

At present, however, we are to examine one only of

these features of the little horn, the uprooting of the three kings. This has all the marks of an historical sign, by which to recognize more clearly the power that is really predicted. A few remarks will be useful, to illustrate the words of the text, and the exact force of the symbol.

And first, it is while the prophet is considering the ten horns that the eleventh is seen to arise. Either then these horns were actually germinating at the time on the head of the beast, which will account at once for this peculiar attention to them; or else, even if the emblem, like that of the image, appeared complete from the first, the Holy Spirit, by fixing the prophet's gaze on them now, and not earlier, teaches just as plainly that this was the time of their actual appearance in the history of the empire.

Again, the little horn rises in the midst of all the others. Hence it cannot be any foreign power, like that of Mahomet, out of the limits of western Rome. The words also seem naturally to imply a gradual and stealthy growth, rather than violent, external conquest.

The horn is declared to be little. And since its pretensions are so haughty and vast, there seems at first a contradiction. But this paradox only adds to the exactness of the emblem. So far as it resembles the ten eyeless horns, it is small, namely, in temporal power and dominions. But it has other features peculiar to itself, the eye of the seer, and the mouth of the prophet. In virtue of these, it assumes a right of control over the mute and bestial kingdoms. Its territory is small, but its spiritual pretensions almost unbounded.

The three uprooted horns belong to the fourth beast. And this proves at once the error of that early opinion, which interprets them of Lybia, Egypt, and Ethiopia. They are also uprooted to make way for the growth of the little horn, as it germinates on the head of the beast. This implies rather displacement and indirect overthrow, than open conquest.

The prophecy does not define whether the three horns

are uprooted at the same time, or in succession. The emblem, however, leans rather to the second view. The number of the kings is never called seven ; but twelve times the number *ten* is specified, openly or by implication. Now since *ten* is the characteristic number, and those which fall are replaced, the spirit of the emblem is best preserved, if both the fall and replacement are successive.

Lastly, the uprooting of these horns is an historical sign, by which to define more plainly the little horn, and the time of its rise. This event, in the prophecy, fills up the space between the destruction of the former unity of the iron Empire, and the fresh unity it regains under the supremacy of this new and mysterious power. It is not three provinces which are incorporated ; but three ruling powers which are prostrated and overthrown ; after which the little horn is fully established, and its moral features and boastful pretensions are fully displayed. It is now time to examine the facts of history, and see whether, here also, they do not strictly answer to the announcement of the prophecy.

The bishopric of Rome, even before the fall of the empire, had sunk very low in worldliness and ambition. Its state is described in these remarkable terms, by Ammianus and Gibbon, under the episcopate of Damasus, in the close of the fourth century.

' The prefecture of Juventius was accompanied with peace and plenty ; but the tranquillity of the government was soon disturbed by a bloody sedition of the distracted people. The ardour of Damasus and Ursinus to seize on the episcopal seat *surpassed the ordinary measure of human ambition.* They contended with the rage of party ; the quarrel was maintained by the wounds and death of their followers ; and the prefect was constrained by their violence to retire into the suburbs. Damasus prevailed ; the well disputed victory remained on the side of his faction ; one hundred and thirty-seven dead bodies were found in the Basilica of Sicininus, where the Christians held their religious

assemblies ; and it was long before the angry minds of the people resumed their usual tranquillity. When I consider the splendour of the capital, I am not astonished that so valuable a prize should inflame the desires of ambitious men, or produce the fiercest and most obstinate contests. The successful candidate is secure that he will be enriched by the offerings of matrons ; that as soon as his dress is composed with becoming care and elegance, he may proceed in his chariot through the streets of Rome ; and that the sumptuousness of the imperial table will not equal the delicate entertainments provided by the taste, and at the expense of the Roman pontiffs. How much more rationally would those pontiffs consult their true happiness, if instead of alleging the greatness of the city as an excuse for their manners, they would imitate the exemplary life of some provincial bishops, whose temperance, and sobriety, and humble apparel, recommend their pure and modest virtue to the Deity and his true worshippers.'

Thus already had the bishop of Rome attained a bad pre-eminence in the church for his luxury and ambition, and caused the name of Christ to be blasphemed by the heathen. ' This lively picture,' as Gibbon truly observes, ' of the wealth and luxury of the Popes in the fourth century becomes doubly curious, as it represents the intermediate degree between the humble poverty of the apostolic fishermen, and *the royal state of a temporal prince*, whose dominions extend from the confines of Naples to the banks of the Po.'

The spiritual degeneracy must indeed have been great, when wholesale murder and butchery could form a pathway to the episcopal throne. But although the mystery of evil was even now in full activity, there were still many and great obstacles to its full triumph. So long as the imperial power survived in the west, there was an effectual let and hindrance to the growth of papal ambition. But when, under Augustulus, the unity of the empire was extinguished, and ten distinct powers arose to share the perishing monarchy, a fresh

door was opened to the growing pride and aspiring pretensions of the bishop of Rome. Great impediments, however, still remained to be overcome. The imperial dignity was extinct; but the sceptre of Italy was not lost or broken; it was still wielded, and with no common energy, by a barbarian ruler.

'Royalty was familiar to the barbarians; and the submissive people of Italy were prepared to obey, without a murmur, the authority which Odoacer should condescend to exercise, as the vicegerent of the emperor of the West. But he had resolved to abolish that useless and expensive office, and the unfortunate Augustulus was made the instrument of his own disgrace.

'The king of Italy was not unworthy of the high station to which his valour and fortune had exalted him. His savage manners were polished by the habits of conversation; and he respected, though a conqueror and barbarian, the institutions, and even the prejudices of his subjects. . . . . The laws of the emperors were strictly enforced, and the civil administration of Italy was still exercised by the pretorian prefect, and his subordinate officers. Like the rest of the barbarians, Odoacer had been instructed in the Arian heresy; but he revered the monastic and episcopal characters, and the silence of the Catholics attests the toleration which they enjoyed. *The peace of the city required the interposition of his prefect Basilius in the choice of a Roman pontiff*, and the decree which restrained the clergy from alienating their lands was ultimately designed for the benefit of the people, whose devotion would have been taxed, to repair the dilapidations of the church. Italy was protected by the arms of its conqueror; and its frontiers were respected by the barbarians of Gaul and Germany, who had so long insulted the feeble race of Theodosius.'

Thus, on the fall of the empire, a horn arose which stood directly in the way of the bishop of Rome, in his aspirations after worldly greatness. But this rival had no firm or lasting dominion.

'Notwithstanding the prudence and success of Odoacer, his kingdom exhibited the sad prospect of misery and desolation. Since the age of Tiberius the decay of agriculture had been felt in Italy; and it was a just subject of complaint that the life of the Roman people depended on the accidents of the winds and waves. In the division and decline of the empire, the tributary harvests of Egypt and Africa were withdrawn, and all the country was exhausted by the irretrievable losses of war, famine, and pestilence. St. Ambrose has deplored the ruin of a populous district, which had once been adorned with the flourishing cities of Bologna, Modena, Regium, and Placentia. *Pope Gelasius was a subject of Odoacer*, and he affirms with strong exaggeration, that in Aemilia, Tuscany, and the adjacent provinces, the human species were almost extirpated. . . . The various bands of Italian mercenaries who associated under the standard of an elective general, claimed a large privilege of freedom and rapine. A monarchy destitute of national union and hereditary right, hastened to its dissolution.'

This first power, then, which stood in the way of the rising episcopate, was weak in its very nature, and was soon to be uprooted and overthrown. The Ostrogoths, under Theodoric their able and valiant king, were the immediate instruments of its fall.

'Theodoric addressed the emperor of the East in these words. 'Though your servant is maintained in affluence through your bounty, graciously listen to the wishes of my heart. Italy, the inheritance of your predecessors, and *Rome itself the mistress of the world*, fluctuate under the oppression and violence of Odoacer the mercenary. Direct me, with my national troops, to march against the tyrant.' The proposal was accepted by the Byzantine court. . . . In many obscure though bloody battles, Theodoric fought and conquered; till at length surmounting every obstacle by skilful conduct and persevering courage, he descended from the Julian Alps, and displayed his invincible banners on the confines of Italy.'

'The fierce conflict was finally decided by the abilities, experience, and valour of the Gothic king. . . . From the Alps to the extremity of Calabria, Theodoric reigned by right of conquest; the Vandal ambassadors surrendered the island of Sicily, as a lawful appendage of his kingdom; and *he was accepted as the deliverer of Rome by the senate and people, who had shut their gates against the flying usurper.*'

After three years Ravenna surrendered, and Odoacer soon after was treacherously put to death. 'The royalty of Theodoric was proclaimed by the Goths, with the tardy, reluctant, and ambiguous consent of the emperor of the East.' 'He reduced under a strong and regular government, the unprofitable countries of Rhaetia, Noricum, Dalmatia and Pannonia, from the source of the Danube and the territory of the Bavarians, to the petty kingdom which the Gepidæ had erected on the ruins of Sirmium.'

Meanwhile the pretensions of the Roman see were rising to a higher and higher pitch of ambition. The words of Ennodius, adopted as their own by a Roman synod, on the occasion of an appeal to Theodoric from the election of Symmachus, may give some conception of its actual claims. The adverse party had urged that Symmachus, before admission to the see, ought to be cleared of some disgraceful charges, which had never been examined or disproved. The apologist replies in these words:

'I assert that the framer of laws is not included, unless he choose, within the bounds of his own appointment. . . . The causes of other men, perhaps, God may have chosen to terminate by men; but the prelate of that see He has reserved, without question, for His own judgment. He has chosen that the successors of the blessed Peter should owe their innocence to heaven only. Do not think that those minds will have no fear of inquisitors, which God has reserved for his own investigation. You will say, perhaps, that such will be the condition of all in that great inquiry. I will answer

that it was said to one only, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." And again, that by the voice of the saints the dignity of the pontiffs of that see is made venerable through the whole world; while *all the faithful everywhere are put under it, and it is declared to be the head of the whole body;* of which see that appears to me to be spoken by the prophet—If this is humbled, to whose help will ye flee? and where will ye leave your glory?'

But the accession of Theodoric had removed one superior from the path of this aspiring see, only to replace it by another. The Gothic kings claimed and exercised the prerogatives of sovereignty over the bishops of Rome. The disputed elections were decided and even superseded by the Arian monarch. Before the papacy could root itself firmly, and assert an effectual independence, this power, in its turn, needed also to be overthrown. After two generations, during which Rome and its bishops were subject to the Gothic rulers, Belisarius, the general of Justinian, accomplished this further change.

The Gothic overthrow, like that of Odoacer and the Heruli, was due mainly to the Roman Church, impatient of that power, whatever it might be, which from time to time claimed dominion over it. 'The Goths consented to trust even Rome itself to the faith of its inhabitants. Leuderis, an aged warrior, was left in the capital with four thousand soldiers; a feeble garrison, which might have seconded the zeal, but was incapable of opposing the wishes of the Romans. A momentary enthusiasm of patriotism and religion was kindled in their minds. They furiously exclaimed that *the Apostolic throne should no longer be profaned by the triumph or toleration of Arianism;* that the tombs of the Cæsars should no longer be trampled by the savages of the north; . . . and they fondly hailed the restoration of a Roman emperor as a new era of freedom and prosperity. The deputies of the *pope and clergy, the senate and people*, invited the lieutenant of Justinian to accept

their voluntary allegiance, and to enter the city, whose gates would be thrown open for his reception. The city, after sixty years servitude, was delivered from the yoke of the barbarians. The first days, which coincided with the old Saturnalia, were devoted to mutual congratulations and public joy ; and the Catholics prepared to celebrate, without a rival, the approaching festival of the nativity of Christ.'

But the conflict had not yet ceased. After the fall of Vitiges and in the absence of Belisarius, the Gothic power recovered under the able guidance of Totila. Rome was again besieged, and the hatred of the Church against the Gothic nation is still conspicuous in the history.

'The continuance of hostilities had embittered the national hatred. The Arian clergy were ignominiously driven from Rome ; Pelagius, the Archdeacon, returned without success from an embassy to the Gothic camp ; and a Sicilian bishop, the envoy or nuncio of the pope, was deprived of both his hands, for daring to utter falsehoods in the service of the church and state.'

Soon after, that overthrow of the Gothic power which Belisarius had successfully begun, was completed by Narses. 'After a reign of sixty years, the throne of the Gothic kings was filled by the exarchs of Ravenna, the representatives, in peace and war, of the Roman emperor. Their jurisdiction was soon reduced to a narrow province ; but Narses himself, the first and most powerful of the exarchs, administered above fifteen years the entire kingdom of Italy. . . . Its civil state, after the agitation of a long tempest, was fixed by a pragmatic sanction, which the emperor promulgated at the request of the pope. Rome was degraded to the second rank. . . . The twenty years of the Gothic war, had consummated the distress and depopulation of Italy.'

A second horn had now been uprooted before the rising influence of the Roman pontiff. His power continued steadily to increase, in the midst of these tumul-

tuous changes, and partly from ambition, partly from the discord of Italy, assumed more and more a political and worldly form. But an effectual barrier still remained in the way of its direct acquisition of temporal sovereignty.

A third power, which had already risen within the empire, now came down upon the fields of Italy, and into immediate contact with the Roman see. This was the tribe of Longobards or Lombards, under Alboin, their youthful king, who had already overthrown the Gepidæ, and now sought for a more delicious conquest.

'Alboin ascended the Julian Alps and looked down with contempt and desire on the fruitful plains, to which his victory communicated the perpetual application of Lombardy. . . Terror preceded his march. From the Trentine hills to the gates of Ravenna and Rome, the inland regions of Italy became, without a battle or a siege, the lasting patrimony of the invader.'

The exarchate, however, though greatly crippled in strength, was not uprooted or overthrown; and the Roman see had hitherto obtained no temporal dominion. But the way was now preparing rapidly for this consummation. Situate, after the Lombard invasion, on the verge of two contending and balanced states, with spiritual pretensions which every day assumed a more imposing grandeur, the pontiffs, by degrees, became invested with all the features of a worldly power, even before any direct transfer to the Pope of temporal dominions.

'The expiring dignity of Rome was marked by the freedom and energy of her complaints. "If you are incapable," she said, "of delivering us from the sword of the Lombards, save us at least from the calamities of famine." A supply of corn was transported from Egypt to the Tiber, and the Roman people, invoking the name, not of Camillus, but of St. Peter, repulsed the barbarians from their walls. But the relief was accidental, the danger pressing and perpetual. . . . Italy was still afflicted, and Rome was again besieged. . . . Maurice

gave audience to a second deputation of priests and senators ; the duties and the menaces of religion were forcibly urged in the letters of the Roman pontiff ; and his nuncio, the deacon Gregory, was alike qualified to solicit the powers either of heaven or of earth. The emperor adopted with stronger effect the measures of his predecessor ; some formidable chiefs were persuaded to embrace the friendship of the Romans : the passes of the Alps were delivered to the Franks ; and the Pope encouraged them to violate, without scruple, their oaths and engagements to the misbelievers.'

For the present, however, the power of the Lombards remained in the ascendant. 'The victorious Autharis asserted his claim to the dominion of Italy. At the foot of the Rhætian Alps, he rifled the treasures of a sequestered island in the lake of Como. At the extreme point of Calabria, he touched with his spear a column on the sea-shore of Rhegium, proclaiming that ancient landmark to stand the immoveable boundary of his kingdom. . . . During a period of two hundred years, Italy was unequally divided between the kingdoms of the Lombards, and the exarchate of Ravenna. Three subordinate provinces of Rome, of Venice, and of Naples, which were divided by hostile lands from the palace of Ravenna, acknowledged both in peace and war the supremacy of the exarchs. The remainder of Italy was possessed by the Lombards ; and from Pavia, the royal seat, their kingdom was extended to the east, the north and the west, as far as the confines of the Avars, the Bavarians, and the Franks of Austrasia and Burgundy. It included Tyrol, the Milanese, Piedmont, the coast of Genoa, Mantua, Parma, and Modena, the grand duchy of Tuscany, and a large portion of the ecclesiastical states.'

But in the mean time, out of the ruins of Old Rome, a new power was evidently arising, to assume dominion over the western commonwealth. 'Amidst the arms of the Lombards, and the despotism of the Greeks, Rome had reached, about the close of the sixth century, the

lowest period of her depression. . . . The hostile approach of the Lombards was often felt, and continually feared. Like Thebes, or Babylon, or Carthage, the name of Rome might have been erased from the earth, *if the city had not been animated by a vital principle, which again restored her to honour and dominion.* A vague tradition was embraced, that two Jewish teachers, a tent-maker and a fisherman, had formerly been executed in the circus of Nero ; and at the end of five hundred years their genuine or fictitious relics *were adored as the Palladium of Christian Rome.* The pilgrims of the East and West resorted to the holy threshold ; but the shrines of the apostles were guarded by miracles and invisible terrors. It was fatal to touch, it was dangerous to behold the bodies of the saints ; and those who presumed to disturb the repose of the sanctuary, were affrighted by visions, or punished with sudden death. . . . . The temporal power of the Popes insensibly arose from the calamities of the times, and the Roman bishops, who have deluged Europe and Asia with blood, were compelled to reign as the ministers of charity and peace.

During the eighth century, the see of Rome continued to advance in power, and stood forth more and more plainly, the champion of idolatry and superstition. But these features became most conspicuous in the time of the Iconoclast controversy, when, to sustain the practice of image worship, Gregory the Second instigated the Italians to revolt from the Emperor Leo. The letters of that Pope, written to the emperor on that occasion, form a moral picture of the Little Horn, at the time when it was first established as a temporal power. The following are some extracts :—

When you did run well, who has stunned your ears, and perverted your heart, like a broken bow, that you have looked backward ? Ten years, by the grace of God, you walked rightly, and made no mention of the holy images ; but now you say that they occupy the place of idols ; and that they who worship them are idolaters. But you have rejected and renounced, and cast aside

our holy fathers and teachers; whom with your own hand you have promised to follow and obey. *Our holy and inspired fathers and teachers, and the six councils in Christ, these are our Scriptures, and our light and salvation;* these handed it down to us, and ye receive not their testimonies. We are compelled to write to you unlearned and stupid things, since you are unlearned and stupid, but in very deed they contain the power and truth of God. We adjure you by God, lay aside the pride and arrogance that surround you, and with much humility lend us your sincere attention.

Let us now observe those infallible comments on Scripture which 'contain the power and truth of God.' And first the Pope explains the reason of the second commandment. 'He spake it on account of the idolaters who possessed the land of promise, who adored things of gold, and silver, and wood, and every kind of creature, and all flying birds; and said, These are our gods, and there is no other god. On account of these hurtful mischievous handicrafts of the devil, God said, Adore them not.' Such absurd and foolish lies does the Pope commend to the emperor, as "the power and truth of God."

He then proceeds to adduce the ark and the cherubim as a warrant for image-worship, and gives the following original exposition of the vision of Moses—Exod. xxxiv.

And God said to him, Make Cherubim and Seraphim, and put testimonies in the ark for a memorial to your generations, the tables, the pot, the rod, and the manna. Are these figures and likenesses made with hands or not? Moses, that great prophet, being seized with fear, wishing to see a figure and a likeness, lest perhaps he might err, entreated God, saying, "Shew me thyself manifestly, that I may see thee."

After this foolish and wicked perversion of the prayer of Moses, Gregory proceeds to display his singular fertility of invention as an expositor and an historian.

'Then,' after the crucifixion, 'men began from the whole world, like flying eagles, to visit Jerusalem; as the Lord said in the gospels, Where the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together. For Christ is the corpse; and the eagles flying on high

are the religious and the lovers of Christ. And when they had seen the Lord, as they had seen him, they painted him for the public view ; when they had seen James, the brother of the Lord, as they had seen him, they painted him for the public view ; when they had seen Stephen the first martyr, as they had seen him, they painted him for the public view ; and in one word, when they had seen the face of the martyrs, they painted them ; and at the sight of these, men through the whole world forsook diabolical worship, and regarded these, not with *latria*, but with reverence, Whether does it seem to you, O emperor, a duty to adore these images, or a diabolical delusion? When Christ lived at Jerusalem, Abgarus, who was then king of Edessa, and had heard of his miracles, wrote a letter to Christ ; who sent an answer to him in his own handwriting, and also his sacred and glorious effigy. Send then to that image not made with hands, and see : multitudes of eastern people assemble there and offer their prayers.

The next paragraph yields an instructive lesson of the downward course of all idolatrous corruptions. Gregory continues in these words :—

'Why do we not search out and depict the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ? Because we know not who He is ; and it is impossible to trace out and depict the nature of God. And if we beheld and knew Him, as we do His Son, we might trace out His form also, and depict Him ; and you would call even His express image an idol.'

This hypothetical idolatry is of itself sufficiently revolting. But the practice of the Roman Church has since outstripped the doctrine of its infallible head, and therefore Baronius appends this remark. 'Afterwards *it has become usual in the Church that the Father and the Holy Spirit should be painted!*' Thus, one step of apostasy leads on to another, each more revolting than the last. The Pope then resumes with the following original and modest argument.

Turn away your wicked imaginations, I beseech you, and rescue your soul from the curses which you now receive from the whole world ; for even the little children mock at you. Go into their grammar schools, and say, I am the destroyer and persecutor of the images ; and at once they would fling their table-books at your head ; and what you have not been taught by the wise, you

will be taught by the foolish. You have written, Uzziah, the king of the Jews, after eight hundred years brought out the brazen serpent from the temple; and I, after eight hundred years have brought out the idols from the church. Truly Uzziah was your brother, and had your perverseness; and tyrannized, as you do, over the priests of his time; for that serpent the holy David brought into the temple with the holy ark. . . . We wished ourselves, as having the dominion, and the authority, and the absolute power from holy Peter the prince, to inflict punishment on you; but since you have heaped a curse on yourself, stay and keep it with your fellow-counsellors whom you embrace. . . It were better for you, O King, the choice being offered, to be called a heretic, than a persecutor and destroyer of the histories and pictures, the images and sufferings of the Lord. The heretic is known to few, and not to many; and the reasonings are intricate, and those who dogmatize and are not humble, fall at once, from their ignorance and darkness, and their condemnation is not so great as yours. For you have manifestly persecuted things which are looked upon and seen, like the daylight, and have stripped bare the churches of God.

From this singular proof, that to assail idols, because they can be seen, is a greater offence than to blaspheme God and his truth, which are unseen, the Pope proceeds to direct boasting and open defiance.

You ought to know that the pontiffs are set as a middle wall and mound of the East and the West, and are the arbiters and guides of peace. But if you insolently vaunt over us, and fling out threats, we need not descend to the contest. The Roman Pontiff will retire twenty-four stadia into the district of Campania: then go, hunt the winds. . . . All the West turn their eyes upon our humility. If we are not such as our predecessor, yet they have great confidence in us, and in him whom you threaten that you will break down, and abolish his image; the holy Peter, whom all the kingdoms of the West account as A GOD UPON EARTH.

Such was the impiety and arrogance of this rising power, when two horns had already been uprooted, and the dominion of the third was drawing to its close. The steps of this last overthrow remain to be unfolded.

'The love of arms and rapine was congenial to the Lombards; and both the prince and the people were irresistibly tempted by the disorders of Italy, the na-

kedness of Rome, and *the unwarlike profession of her new chief*. On the first edicts of the emperor, they declared themselves the champions of the holy images; Luitprand invaded the province of Romagna, which had already assumed that distinctive appellation; the Catholics of the exarchate yielded without reluctance to his civil and military power; and a foreign enemy was introduced for the first time into the impregnable fortress of Ravenna. The policy of Luitprand alarmed Italy with a vexatious alternative of hostility and truce. His successor Astolphus declared himself the equal enemy of the Emperor and the Pope. Ravenna was subdued by force or treachery, and this final conquest extinguished the series of the exarchs, who had reigned with a subordinate power since the time of Justinian and the ruin of the Gothic kingdom. Rome was summoned to acknowledge the victorious Lombard as her lawful sovereign; the annual tribute of a piece of gold was fixed as the ransom of each citizen; and the sword of destruction was unsheathed to exact the penalty of her disobedience. . . . . The Romans hesitated; they intreated, they complained, and the threatening barbarians were checked by arms and negotiations, till the Pope had secured the friendship of an ally and avenger beyond the Alps.'

And now we have arrived at the last stage in the rise of the Little Horn, in the overthrow of the third and last of those rival powers which stood in its road to greatness. The moral character of the event is deeply instructive. To obtain freedom from the threatened yoke of the Lombards, and to secure further the possession of a temporal dominion, the Pope made his appeal to Pepin, son of Charles Martel. And what motives does he employ? He boldly introduces St. Peter in his own person, as claiming his aid, and prostitutes all the most solemn motives of religion, its threatenings, and rewards, to the one purpose of securing the Pope's temporal sovereignty, and the destruction of the Lombard kingdom. The following are the words of this strange

production, the basis on which the dominion of the pontiffs has been established, the fit and natural foundation for a kingdom of fraud and delusion.

'Peter, called to be an Apostle by Jesus Christ the Son of the living God, . . . and by me, the whole Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church, head of all the churches of God, founded on the firm rock by the blood of our Redeemer; and Stephen, prelate of the same holy church: Grace, peace, and valour to rescue the same holy Church from the hands of persecutors, be more fully ministered to you, most excellent men, Pepin, Charles, and Carlomen, the three kings of the Franks, &c.

'I Peter the Apostle, called by Christ the Son of the living God, am ordained by His power the illuminator of the whole world, the Lord our God himself confirming it, saying, Go and teach all nations. And again, Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye remit, they are remitted. And commending his sheep severally to me, his humble servant and called apostle, he says, Feed my sheep, feed my lambs. And again, Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church. Wherefore, let all who have heard and obeyed my preaching, believe that their sins are remitted in this world by the command of God, and that without spot they will go forward unto that life (eternal). And since the light of the Holy Spirit has shone in your very resplendent hearts; assuredly your hope of future reward is held by being firmly united to this Apostolic Roman Church, committed unto us.

'Wherefore I Peter, the Apostle of God, who have you for my adopted sons, exhort you to defend from the hands of its enemies this Roman state, and the people committed to me of God; and the house also, where I repose according to the flesh; and I admonish you earnestly to free the Church of God, committed to me by the Divine power, since they suffer the greatest afflictions and oppressions from the most wicked race of the Lombards. Be assured for certain, most beloved, that I myself, as if alive in the flesh before you, am your helper, and by this entreaty bind and constrain you with strong adjurations. Wherefore, according to the promise which we have received from the same Lord God our Redeemer, we claim all of you the people of the Franks, as peculiar to us among all nations.

'Therefore I protest and admonish you, as in a riddle, and conjure you by a firm obligation; you the most Christian kings, and the whole people of the kingdom of the Franks; and as if alive and present in the flesh, I Peter the Apostle of God, deal with you. Therefore, firmly believe that I address you by the word of exhortation; for, though absent in body, in spirit I am not ab-

sent. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward.

'But also our Lady, Mary, mother of God, and ever virgin, along with us, adjures and entreats you with mighty adjurations, and monishes, and commands you; as also thrones and dominions, even the whole celestial army, and the martyrs and confessors of Christ, beseech and adjure. Since she grieves for that holy Roman Church committed to us by the Lord God, and the sheep who dwell there, defend and free it with all haste from the hands of the persecuting Lombards; lest my body, and my house where it rests by the command of God, and my peculiar people, be torn and slain any more by that wicked and perjured nation. Render help then with all your power to the Roman people, that I the Apostle Peter may repay you with alternate patronage in the day of future account, may prepare for you most resplendent and glorious tabernacles in the kingdom of God, and render you in time the rewards of an eternal retribution, and the infinite joys of paradise; if only you defend with all speed my peculiar people, and my city of Rome, and your brethren the Romans, from the hands of the impious Lombards. I Peter the Apostle of God, adjure you my beloved and adopted sons, I adjure you by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and exhort and admonish you with threats before the terrible God, the Creator of all things; and with me also, the holy Catholic and Apostolic church: do not suffer this Roman state to perish, in which the Lord has placed my body, which he has commended to me, *and made the foundation of the faith.* Be not separated from my people, the people of Rome: SO SHALL YE NOT BE CAST OUT AND SEPARATED FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND LIFE ETERNAL. *Whatsoever ye shall ask of me, I will surely succour you,* and give you my patronage. I conjure you by the living God, do not suffer this my people, the Romans, to be torn by the Lombards, lest your bodies and souls be torn and tortured in the eternal fire of Tartarus, with the Devil and his wicked angels. Remember most firmly that I, the servant of God, in all your necessities, when only you have prayed to me, have aided you, and given you victory over your enemies by the virtue of God. Fulfil quickly my admonition, that ye may deserve more perfectly to obtain my help, through the grace which has been given to me in Christ, the Lord our God.

'See, most beloved sons, I have taught and admonished you. If you shall obey quickly, it shall turn to you for a great reward, to be helped by my succour. In the present life, overcoming all your enemies, and coming to old age, ye shall eat the good things of the earth; and YE SHALL WITHOUT DOUBT ENJOY EVERLASTING LIFE. But if, which we do not believe, ye shall interpose any

delay; know that by the authority of the holy Trinity, and through the grace of the apostleship committed to me, BY TRANSGRESSING OUR EXHORTATION YE ARE SHUT OUT FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND LIFE ETERNAL.'

Such was the impious language of this "mouth speaking great things," by which the temporal dominion of the papacy was at length attained. Urged by these threats, and animated by these promises, Pepin and Charlemagne willingly undertook the task of uprooting the Lombard kingdom, the last enemy which stood in the way of the ambitious see.

'The second expedition of Pepin was not less fortunate and rapid than the first; St. Peter was satisfied, Rome was again saved; and Astolphus was taught the lessons of justice and sincerity by the scourge of a foreign master. After this double chastisement, the Lombards languished about twenty years in a state of languor and decay. But their minds were not yet humbled to their condition; they peevishly harassed the Romans with a repetition of claims, evasions, and inroads, which they undertook without reflection, and terminated without glory. Their expiring monarchy was pressed by the zeal and prudence of Pope Adrian the First, and the genius, fortune, and greatness of Charlemagne; these heroes of the church and state were united in public and domestic friendship, and while they trampled on the prostrate, they varnished their proceedings with the fairest colours of equity and moderation. The passes of the Alps and the walls of Pavia were the only defence of the Lombards. The former were surprised, the latter were invested, by the son of Pepin; and after a blockade of two years, Desiderius, the last of their native princes, surrendered his capital and his sceptre.'

The effects of this change were permanent and final. The last obstacle was now removed. The Popes rose at length to temporal dominion, and obtained a firm and settled place among the horns or kingdoms of the western empire. 'The gratitude of the Carlovingians,' the his-

torian continues, 'was adequate to their obligations, and their names are consecrated as the saviours and benefactors of the Roman church. Her ancient patrimony of farms and houses was transformed by their bounty into the temporal dominion of cities and provinces; and the donation of the exarchate was the first fruits of the victories of Pepin. Astolphus with a sigh relinquished his prey; the keys and the hostages of the principal cities were delivered to the French ambassador; and in his master's name he presented them before the tomb of St. Peter. The ample measure of the exarchate might comprise all the provinces of Italy which had obeyed the emperor and his vicegerent; but its strict and proper limits were included in the territory of Ravenna, Bologna, and Ferrara, and its inseparable dependency was the Pentapolis. . . . To the importunities of the Greeks, Pepin piously replied, that no human consideration should tempt him to resume the gift which he had conferred on the Roman pontiff for the remission of his sins, and the salvation of his soul. The splendid donation was granted in supreme and absolute dominion; and the world beheld for the first time a Christian bishop invested with the prerogatives of a temporal prince; the choice of magistrates, the exercise of justice, the imposition of taxes, and the wealth of the palace of Ravenna. In the dissolution of the Lombard kingdom, the inhabitants of the duchy of Spoleto sought a refuge from the storm, shaved their heads after the Roman fashion, declared themselves the servants and subjects of St. Peter; and completed, by this voluntary surrender, the present circle of the ecclesiastical state.'

The temporal dominion of the Popes was now finally established. The declaration of the prophecy had also been exactly fulfilled. While the empire of Rome was dissolving into fragments, and the ten predicted kings rising out of its ruins, another power, altogether distinct and diverse, rose stealthily in the midst of them, and secured itself a place in the western territory of Europe. From the time of the last emperor of the

west, three dynasties in succession appeared, and wielded the sceptre of nearly the whole of Italy, the Heruli under Odoacer, Theodoric, and the Gothic kings, Alboin and his Lombard successors. Each of these, in succession, was overthrown and destroyed. The overthrow in each case was effected by the direct aid and strenuous efforts of the bishop of Rome, and ended in securing his dominion. It was the bishop of Rome who shut the gates of the imperial city against the defeated Odoacer, rejoiced in his fall, and welcomed the Goths as deliverers. It was the same bishop who invited and encouraged Belisarius to subvert the Gothic kingdom. And finally, it was the bishop of Rome who used all the arts of subtle policy, and brought forth all the devices of profane invention, to effect the downfal of the Lombards, the last impediment here announced in the way of his own progress to ambitious greatness. The power which had thus secured itself a firm place among the states of Europe answered to all the other predicted features of the little horn. It was small indeed in size, but vast in its pretensions. Its outward possessions never exceeded the limits of an Italian province; yet it claimed to itself the keys of heaven and hell, and the sovereign right over the habitable universe. It had eyes like the eyes of a man; for it professed to see, like Elisha, the invisible world; to read the thoughts of the departed, and to interpret the language used in heaven by the apostles of God. It had a mouth speaking great things; for while, on the one hand, it dared to treat Emperors with coarse jesting and scurrilous reproach, when they set themselves against its idols, on the other hand, it boldly assumed the name, the character, the voice and language, of the noblest saints in glory. Three powers in succession had fallen before its presence; till at length, when the last was overthrown, it stood forth to view, wearing every mark of the prophecy deep engraven on its forehead.

But even at this period, the development of its true character was not fully complete. Emboldened by

success, and encouraged by seeming impunity, its claims became higher and higher as years rolled on. Its blasphemous pretensions were more gross, and its persecutions became systematic and undisguised. It remains for us to examine, from its own laws and constitutions, the spiritual features of this mysterious power, as it moulded itself, under the combined influence of superstition and ambitious pride, into the exact resemblance of its prophetic character, revealed in the sacred vision. The Christian, when he compares the church of Rome, as it is pourtrayed in the time of the apostle, with the counterfeit which has usurped the name in later times, may well share in the surprise of the beloved disciple as he gazed on her persecuting cruelty, and "wonder with a great admiration," at the fearful and prodigious change.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHARACTER OF THE LITTLE HORN.

THE PAPAL SUPREMACY.

DAN. VII. 8.—"AND BEHOLD, IN THIS HORN WERE EYES LIKE THE EYES OF MAN, AND A MOUTH SPEAKING GREAT THINGS.

20.—"EVEN OF THAT HORN THAT HAD EYES, AND A MOUTH THAT SPAKE VERY GREAT THINGS, WHOSE LOOK WAS MORE STOUT THAN HIS FELLOWS.

24, 25.—"AND HE SHALL BE DIVERSE FROM THE FIRST, AND SHALL SUBDUE THREE KINGS. AND HE SHALL SPEAK GREAT WORDS AGAINST THE MOST HIGH, AND SHALL WEAR OUT THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH, AND THINK TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS."

AFTER the description of the rise of the Little Horn, the vision proceeds next to unfold its character and pretensions, its judgment and fall. The uprooting of the three horns has been shewn to answer exactly to those steps by which the Papacy rose to temporal dominion. We have now to inquire whether the later history of that power answers equally to the rest of the description; or whether here, for the first time, the connexion is suddenly broken; and the prophecy requires us to vault over twelve hundred years, and to wait for some future power in whom it may be fulfilled.

The chief notes by which the little horn is here described to us are the following—a place within the body of the fourth empire; a time of rise soon after the division of that empire by a ten-fold separation; a character diverse from other kingdoms; the pretensions of a seer and a prophet; boastfulness and persevering arrogance; great words spoken against the Most High;

persecution of the saints, and the claim of a supreme authority over times and laws. The four first of these notes evidently, and beyond all question, meet in the Roman papacy. The others may perhaps be summed up in two main characters—boastful claims to Divine authority and absolute dominion; and systematic persecution of the saints of God. Let us now examine the direct evidence, by which both these characters are fixed upon the Bishop of Rome. No reasonable doubt can there remain concerning the true object of the prophecy. It will be seen to be a plain and strong warning from the Holy Spirit of God, against the ensnaring and subtle delusions of the Church of Rome.

In this stage of inquiry, more than ever, it is a solemn duty to proceed with reverence and caution. The issues at stake are the most weighty and momentous that can well be conceived. If the high claims of the Church of Rome are solid and true, to deny them is of itself a fatal heresy; but to apply to that Church the symbols of the prophecy must amount to an impious blasphemy. If, on the other hand, the prediction before us really belongs to that power; not only are the claims of the papacy a wicked and impious delusion, but the sin of those Protestants is great, who on light or frivolous grounds pervert this testimony of the Holy Ghost from its true purpose, as a Divine warning against a subtle and ruinous delusion. It seems needful then, first of all, to examine briefly the direct evidence on which the papal supremacy is made to rest. We may afterwards, with more confidence, inquire into the fulfilment of the prophecy, and compare the actual claims of the Pope, in his public and solemn laws, with the expressive language of the sacred text.

The doctrine of papal supremacy is founded on reasonings of the following nature. The Church militant on earth is a visible body, and under Christ, must have officers by which it is visibly governed. These, as revealed in Scripture, are bishops, presbyters, and deacons, to be ordained by solemn imposition of hands.

Their authority must depend on a regular appointment by those who have authority to ordain, and thus be derived, in unbroken succession, from the Apostles. Again, unity is a great duty, which the word of God urges and enforces in the strongest terms. This unity, in a body politic like the visible Church, requires subordination and a supreme governing power. The simplest and most natural form of government is a monarchy ; and hence we may infer that such a form has, directly or indirectly, been provided for the Church.

Now if a monarchy be the most perfect form of the Church, we must next inquire what hints Scripture gives us, to explain where this supreme power, this ultimate appeal, must reside. And here it is evident that, among the twelve apostles, Peter commonly holds the first place, and is singled out, on several occasions, for distinct and especial notice. Such are the words of Christ—" Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church ; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." " Take it, and give it unto them for thee and for me." Three times a distinct charge is given to him by name over the sheep of Christ. Hence, if there be a visible princedom in the Church, he will doubtless have the fairest claim to be its fountain head. But this can extend to later ages, only by supposing the episcopal see of St. Peter still to retain and continue this pre-eminence. Now, although the see of that Apostle was for many years at Antioch, there is a general tradition that he was martyred at Rome. Therefore the Roman Church is the see of the prince of Apostles, inherits his supremacy, and exercises dominion, by Divine right, over the whole visible Church of God. And hence the Bishop of Rome, by virtue of his office, must be supposed infallible in definitions of faith ; else he would be unfit for the weighty charge entrusted to him, the promises to the Church would fail, and we should be flung back once more into all the conflicting claims of private judgment, and be unable to secure in the Church any sure standard of final appeal.

On such foundations that immense building is reared, which has now lasted for ages, and still holds captive the faith of a large portion, if not a majority, of nominal Christians. It includes these three main pillars; that union under one visible head is the most perfect, and therefore the divinely-intended form of the Church; that the Scripture texts relating to Peter cannot be inserted by chance, but must imply some permanent lesson of Church order; and, finally, that Rome has an historical claim to be accounted his latest see.

The first maxim is that from which the two others derive all their moral power. If we were once certain that the Church ought to have the form of a visible monarchy, the texts relating to St. Peter, however scanty in themselves, might give him a claim, above any other, to be its fountain-head. And when the choice lay only between Antioch and Rome, even a slight tradition might suffice to ensure the conviction, that the latter, not the former, was the divinely intended seat and centre of unity to the Church. But if the first maxim itself is baseless, not merely the whole chain is broken in its first link, but the two other assumptions are found also to be loaded with difficulties, historical, critical, and doctrinal, which condemn the whole as a groundless fiction, as a mere fable of human invention, without any warrant in the sure word of God.

Now there can be no doubt that complete subjection to one visible head will be the last and highest condition of the Church, when all its members shall be gathered together in the kingdom of God. The question relates, not to the present or final state of the Church triumphant, but to the outward form of the militant Church below; that generation which, from time to time, is called to the faith of Christ, and travels through the world to its final inheritance. This Church may be viewed in three different aspects, as part of the true Church universal, as a system of Divine ordinances and means of grace, and as a visible company of the baptized.

In the first and highest aspect of the Church militant, it is properly invisible, since faith, sincerity and holiness, are objects not sensible to the natural eye. Viewed in this light, it is only a part of the Church universal. It is joined with all the departed saints in one blissful fellowship, of which Christ, and Christ only, is the glorious head. In proportion as any member of the Church on earth rises into this high standing of faith he holds direct communion with the truth of God; the will of Christ, seen clearly in His word, becomes his sufficient guide, and human ordinances become more and more needless, while the law of God, in its spiritual power and fulness, is engraven on his heart. There is here no place for a visible outward monarchy. Just so far as the Christian is a Christian indeed, he has risen above the strife of corruption and the stubbornness of self-will, into that pure light and love of heaven, where no name but the name of Christ has authority or dominion.

But the Church is also a system of ordinances, divine in their main outlines, human in their minor details: designed for the good of Christians, and the means whereby grace, truth, and holiness, may be imparted to their souls. Here, if uniformity is to be secured, there is need of one visible head, one supreme and controlling power. But the question recurs, Is such uniformity desirable in its own nature, or enjoined in the word of God? The answer to each part of the inquiry is the same. If these ordinances were an end in themselves, and not means to the edification of the Church, then it might be needful to enjoin a strict conformity to the same order, through every tribe, nation, and family of the visible Church. But this is not their nature. They are means, and need therefore to be adapted to the varying state of nations and communities. They have, it is true, some elements which are fixed by Christ's appointment; because, though changeable in themselves, His wisdom foresaw that they were adapted to every age of the Church in this dispensation. But

in all other respects, they are variable, and often may need to be varied, for the greater edification of the people. To make universal uniformity needful is thus to mistake altogether their real nature. It perverts them from a means to an end, and thus turns them into an idol; an idol, though less conspicuous to the senses, yet as truly an idol, and one more dangerous, than the open images of wood or stone. To set up a visible head over the Church on this ground, that outward uniformity may everywhere be secured, is thus really to repeat the sin of Nebuchadnezzar, when he set up the image of gold on the plain of Dura, and compelled all the princes to fall down and worship. And thus it has been well and wisely pronounced by our own Church: 'It is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies be in all places one and utterly like; for at all times they have been diverse, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word.'

The same truth is equally plain from Scripture precedents. The Jewish believers continued, with apostolic approbation, to practise all the rites of the law; the Gentile converts were distinctly exempted from them. The same principle of forbearance is extended by St. Paul into an universal law for the Churches of Christ. Rom. xiv.

There is a third light in which the visible Church may be regarded, simply as the whole number of the baptized, without respect to faith, love, or holiness. In this community there is a vast amount of sin, corruption, and self-will, which needs the restraints of law and conscience, to repress crime and violence, and bind it together in social union. Now besides civil governments, when these are imperfect in themselves, there is doubtless room for a visible monarchy which shall include all the Christian nations, and which may bring motives of superstition and religious fear, more powerful than those of brute force, to bear on the natural conscience of unregenerate men. Such a power, in times of violence

and anarchy, might produce, apparently, great social benefits ; and seem a necessary help and ally of mere civil rulers. But then such a power would be, in its very nature and essence, not Christian, but worldly. Its elements will be, not faith and brotherly love, but authority and fear ; its objects those of earth, and not those of heaven. Its life depends on the abdication, by rulers, of their appropriate office ; and it expires of itself, when those rulers understand their true dignity, and learn, like David, Hezekiah, and Josiah, to rule in the fear of God, and with an eye to His glory alone. To erect a monarchy of such a nature, is, in itself, a mere work of human ambition, like that of Alexander or of Cæsar. To claim every Christian as a subject, by virtue of his baptism only, is a tyrannous usurpation on that liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free. To enforce such an authority, under threats of damnation to those who reject it, is an impious blasphemy which God himself will avenge.

On grounds, then, of spiritual reason, the first basis of the papal supremacy is condemned and utterly overthrown. So far as it relates to the Church in its heavenly aspect as the company of true believers, it involves a denial of Christ, the sole Head, and a blasphemous derogation from His honour. In reference to the visible ordinances of the Church, it rests solely on ignorance of their true purpose ; and it thus converts every means of grace into a mere idol, ruinous to the souls of men. So far as it is an external sovereignty over baptized nations, it exactly resembles the ambitious monarchies of Nebuchadnezzar or Cyrus, of Alexander or Cæsar ; except that its foundation is not military conquest, but impious fraud and blasphemous delusion.

The first of the three pillars, then, on which the Papacy is reared, is only rottenness and corruption. But the second is equally unsound. The sole inference that could justly be drawn from the scriptural statements concerning Peter, is a primacy of order and honour, not of jurisdiction or superior authority. This

is quite consistent with faith and brotherly love ; and the like distinction might, without mischief, have been continued in every age of the Church. Some Churches, for their antiquity or boldness, or missionary zeal and labour, might claim a priority of respect and honour. But even this limited primacy of St. Peter, if it deserves the name, finds in Scripture the most serious and weighty limitations. First, it is not invariable ; for in the council of Jerusalem, and the narrative in Galatians, St. James takes precedence of Peter himself. In the strongest passage, Matt. xvi. 11, St. Peter, as Chrysostom well remarks, is only the mouth of the rest, as appears both from the inquiry, "Whom say ye that I am?" and from the charge—"He commanded them that *they* should tell no man that he was the Christ." The rock is clearly not Peter, but the doctrine itself confessed ; and the promise of the keys was shared afterwards with all the Apostles ; and even extended to the consenting agreement of two or three Christians. The threefold charge, to feed the sheep of Christ, merely replaced the Apostle on a level with the rest, after his threefold denial ; and was even based on his renunciation of the proud claim to superior love and faithfulness.

The subjection of the Church to a visible head is still further disproved from the inspired history of its purest age. Peter was sent by the Church down to Samaria. The Church at Jerusalem, when they thought his conduct had been blameworthy, contended with him, and he gave account of his proceedings before them. At the council of Jerusalem, James presided, and gave the final decision. The name of Peter is not distinguished from the other apostles in the decree. St. Paul mentions him, second in order to James, when writing to the Galatian Church. Nay more, he withstood him to the face at Antioch, because he was to be blamed, and asserts everywhere his own equal and independent authority. The only other allusion to him in St. Paul's epistles, is to condemn those who professed to be of Cephas, beyond other inspired teachers. Nay

further, such a superiority of one Apostle was expressly forbidden by our Lord himself, in direct allusion to the ambitious spirit which at first prevailed among them. "Be not ye called Master, for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

It is needless to pursue the inquiry, and examine the weakness of the historical proofs that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome. Granting the fact that his martyrdom was there, which is highly probable; it would by no means follow that Rome was distinctively his see. Certainly it was not such a few months before, when St. Paul wrote his last Epistle. If all the Roman Christians forsook St. Paul, it is not unlikely that they might be guilty of the same sin in the case of St. Peter; and surely there would then be little ground to suppose them invested thereby with a lasting pre-eminence over other churches. Every link in this chain which, for ages, has led captive the Christian nations, when separately examined, crumbles into dust.

We may now, with more safety, examine the direct evidence which shows the true nature of the Papal assumptions. Freed from all fear lest haply we should be fighting against a Divine appointment, we may now securely treat it as a human invention. It remains only to see what degree of ignorance, or sin, or wilful fraud it implies; and whether it satisfies the features of the Divine prediction. For this end, the chief extracts shall be taken from the Decretals, or from the other authorized and public laws of the Papal kingdom.

First, the Little Horn was diverse from the others, and claimed a power distinct in kind, as well as superior to theirs. The following extracts from the Decretals may illustrate this feature of the prophecy.

Decret. i. 10. The constitutions of Princes DO NOT PRECEDE, BUT OBEY the ecclesiastical constitutions.

c. 4. CONSTITUTIONS AGAINST THE CANONS AND DECREES OF THE ROMAN PRELATES, or good manners, ARE OF NO FORCE.

c. 6. THE TRIBUNALS OF KINGS ARE SUBJECT TO THE SACERDOTAL POWER. The law of Christ subjects you to the sacerdotal

power, and puts you under their tribunals. For he has given us power; he has also given us *a princedom far more perfect than your princedoms.* Does it seem just to you that the spirit yield to the flesh, that heavenly things be surpassed by the earthly, and Divine by human?

See then that THE CONSTITUTIONS OF PRINCES ARE TO BE POSTPONED TO THE ECCLESIASTICAL LAWS.

The same doctrine is unfolded in the following extracts, where the Pope is the herald of his own supremacy; in agreement with our Lord's prophecy—"If another come in his own name, him ye will receive."

I. xi. 2. No customs of any one can resist the statutes of the Pontiffs.

Nicholas I. to Michael the Emperor.

It follows that what is sanctioned by the full authority of this see, can be set aside by no custom, in following only private wills, but must be held firm and unshaken.

c. 3. It is not lawful to dissent from the custom of the Roman church.—Julius the Pope to the eastern bishops.

It is most unworthy that any one of the pontiffs, or of the lower orders should forsake this rule, which the see of the blessed Peter follows and enjoins. It is meet that the whole body of the church agree in this observance, which has its authority from that place, *where the Lord fixed the princedom of the whole Church.*

c. 11. WHAT THE ROMAN CHURCH OBSERVES, OUGHT TO BE OBSERVED BY ALL.

Innocent I. to Bishop Decentius.

Who knows not, or fails to notice, that what has been handed down by the prince of the apostles, Peter, to the Roman church, and is guarded even until now, ought to be observed by all men? Nor anything to be added or brought in, which has not *its* authority, or is derived from other example? Especially since it is manifest that in all Italy, Gaul, Spain, Africa, Sicily, and the interjacent islands; no one has instituted churches except those which the venerable apostle Peter or his successors have appointed priests. Or let them read, *if in those provinces any other apostle is found or read to have taught!* But if they do not read it, because it is no where found; it behoves them to follow what the Roman church holds, from which doubtless they had their beginning.

A bold challenge is this, for an infallible head of the Church, and to be found embodied in its infallible de-

crees. It is cruel thus to sweep away the lucrative legend of St. James of Compostella, whose shrine, with the direct sanction of the Popes, has been honoured with such countless pilgrimages. But what shall we say of a Pope so ignorant as not to know that St. Paul preached in Italy, or so impudent as to deny it, and turn the denial into a challenge to all the churches? What shall we say also of the ignorance, which did not know that the Gaulish churches, under Irenæus, derived their origin through St. John, and the Christians of the East? Ignorance, fraud, and arrogance, are combined in this Decretal, in nearly equal proportions.

I. xii. 1. No one may act against the discipline of the Roman church.

Calixtus I. to all the Bishops.

It is not fit that the members depart from THE HEAD, but, as Scripture testifies, that all the members follow THE HEAD. Now it is doubtful to no one that the Apostolic church is the mother of all churches, from whose rules you ought in no way to deviate. For AS THE SON OF GOD CAME TO DO THE WILL OF HIS FATHER, SO OUGHT YOU ALSO TO DO THE WILL OF YOUR MOTHER, WHICH IS THE CHURCH.

This is a most instructive decree. The Pope is expressly substituted for Christ, as THE HEAD, without restriction or limitation. Rome, in like manner, replaces 'the Jerusalem above,' which, as the Scripture indeed testifies, is the mother of all Christians. Finally, the will of the Roman Church is declared to be just as absolute as the will of God the Father. '*So* ought you also to obey the Church,' without reserve, without limitation, even as Christ obeyed the Father. Is not this to speak great words against the Most High?

c. 2. Gregory IV. to all the bishops of Gaul, Germany, Europe, and all the provinces.

It is doubtful to no one that every appeal of sacred religion ought to be referred to the apostolic see, as to the head of the churches; and thence derive its rule, whence also it drew its origin. The sanction of whose authority let all priests observe, who would not be torn from the firm foundation of the apostolic rock, on which Christ has founded the universal church.

I. xiv. 3. Also the decretal letters which the most blessed Popes at various times have given from the city of Rome with the advice of various Fathers, are to be received with veneration.

If this decree were ambiguous, and open to a modest construction, there are two others which fix its meaning, and shew the degree of 'veneration' really enjoined.

I. xix. 2. Agatho the Pope to all the bishops.

ALL THE DECISIONS OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE MUST BE SO RECEIVED, AS IF THEY WERE CONFIRMED BY THE VOICE OF THE DIVINE PETER HIMSELF.

I. xix. 6. THE DECRETAL EPISTLES ARE NUMBERED AMONGST THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES.

"In canonical scriptures let the most skilful searcher of the divine writings follow as much as possible the authority of the catholic churches, among which scriptures truly are those epistles which the apostolic see has deserved to have, and others to receive therefrom."

It is needless to remark how flagitiously the words of Augustine are here wrested from their true meaning. The heading shows the perverted sense imposed on them, and which is, doubtless, to be received 'as if it were the voice of the Divine Peter himself.' What can be a more complete changing of laws, than to foist upon the Church the huge volume of the Decretals, abounding in lies, as infallible and inspired, and equal to the Scriptures themselves? What could be spoken more blasphemous, than such decrees, against the pure and perfect word of God?

I. xvii. 1. A council cannot be gathered without the authority of the Roman pontiff.

Marcellus the Pope to Maxentius.

You cannot make a synod of bishops without the authority of this holy see, though you might gather some bishops together. Nor can you condemn any bishop who has appealed to this apostolic see, before a definitive sentence proceed from hence.

Thus the law and promise of Christ are directly abrogated, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

c. 2. No council is ratified which is not propped by the authority of the Roman church.

Julius I. to the Eastern bishops.

No council has been, or ever will be ratified, which is not upheld by the authority of the Roman church.

Thus, by one sentence, the authority of the first council at Jerusalem is clearly swept away.

c. 5. Pelagius II. to the bishops of Constantinople.

By many apostolic, ecclesiastical, and canonical rules we are taught that councils ought not to be celebrated without the judgment of the Roman pontiff. Wherefore your, not council, but conventicle or mock council, is annulled, and whatever has been done there, is made empty and powerless. Beware that you presume not to do such things under any advice, if you would not lose the communion of the apostolic see.

c. 6. First, the merit of the apostle Peter, and following thereon by the command of the Lord, the authority of the venerable councils, has given that see a singular power among the churches, nor may the ruler of the forenamed see be subject to the judgment of inferiors.

1. xix. 1. The decretal epistles have the force of authority.

Nicolas the Pope to the bishops of Gaul.

For if the OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS ARE TO BE RECEIVED, though they are not annexed in full to the code of canons, BECAUSE A JUDGMENT OF HOLY POPE INNOCENT SEEMS TO BE PUBLISHED FOR RECEIVING THEM, it remains that the decretal epistles of the Roman pontiffs are to be received, even though they are not embodied in the code of the canons.

Here, in express terms, not only the Decretals are raised to equal authority with the Scriptures, but the word of God itself is made to derive all its authority from the approving judgment of 'Holy Pope Innocent.' This is, indeed, to speak great words against the Most High; for a higher power is ascribed to the Pope, than our Lord himself ever claimed or exercised in the days of his ministry on earth.

c. 3. The Capitulars of Charlemagne.

'In memory of the blessed apostle Peter, let us honour the holy Roman and apostolic see; since she, who is the mother to us of the sacerdotal dignity, ought to be the mistress of ecclesiastical law Wherefore humility must be joined with submission; and al-

though a yoke scarcely tolerable were imposed by that holy see, let us bear and tolerate it with pious devotion.'

The Apostle St. Paul commands us, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with a yoke of bondage." The Decretals annul his command, and enjoin, that if the Pope shall impose 'a yoke scarcely tolerable,' we are to receive it 'with pious devotion'—the pious devotion of a direct rebellion against the command of God.

I. xix. 4. Stephen the Pope.

For indeed, since the holy Roman church, over which Christ has willed that we preside, is set for a mirror and example, *whatever it has decreed, whatever it now ordains, must be perpetually and irrefragably observed by all men.*

It has often been made an objection to the view which applies the Little Horn to the Bishop of Rome, that the predicted horn must be one person. This is refuted by the constant use of the symbol in these visions. But the following passage will shew to what a height the official unity is carried, from the lips of the Pope himself.

c. 7. Leo I. to the bishop of Vienne.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, has appointed that the truth, which before was contained in the voice of the law and the prophets, should go forth by the apostolic trumpet to the salvation of the universe; as it is written,—"Their sound went out into all the world." But the Lord has willed that the sacrament of this gift should so pertain to the office of all the apostles, as to place it chiefly in the most blessed Peter, the highest of all the apostles; that from him, as a kind of head, he might pour down his own gifts upon the whole body; that whoever has dared to recede from the solid foundation of Peter, may understand himself to be an alien from the divine mysteries. For HE HATH RECEIVED HIM INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS OWN UNDIVIDED UNITY, and willed that he should be named by His own title, saying, "Thou art Peter; and on this rock will I build my church;" that by a wonderful gift of God's grace, the building of the eternal temple might rest on the firm foundation of Peter, strengthening his church by this firmness, that the gates of hell might not prevail against it.

I. xxi. 3. Gelasius, bishop of Rome to all the orthodox.

Though all the catholic churches through the world are the one chamber of Christ, yet the holy Roman catholic and apostolic

church is preferred to all others, by no synodical decrees, but having obtained the primacy by the voice of the Lord, saying, "Thou art Peter," &c. Therefore the Roman church is the first see of the apostle Peter, *not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing.*

c. 4. Nicolas the Pope to Michael the emperor.

An inferior see cannot absolve a superior, whence the prophet says, "Shall the axe glory against him that heweth therewith? or the saw lift up itself against him that useth it?"

Here the language which the Lord God uses concerning His own Divine sovereignty, is boldly taken by the Pope, and applied to himself, as the measure of his own claims.

I. xxii. 1. Nicholas II. to the Milanese.

The Roman church has instituted all the prerogatives of each patriarchate, the primacies of the metropolitans, the seats of the bishops, and the dignities of churches of every rank. But that church He alone has founded, and reared on the rock of the newly rising faith, who committed to the blessed key bearer of eternal life the authority both of earthly and heavenly empire. No earthly decision, but that word by which heaven and earth and all the elements were made, has founded the Roman church. It exercises His privilege, it is supported by His authority. *Whoever seeks to take away this privilege of the Roman Church, without doubt falls into heresy, and is undoubtedly to be called a heretic.*

In the following decretal, a forged epistle of Anacletus, we have a curious specimen both of the critical knowledge, and strictness of reasoning, which enter into this compilation of fraud, to which we are to listen as 'the voice of the Divine Peter himself.'

I. xxii. 2. Anacletus to all bishops.

'The holy Roman and apostolic church has obtained the primacy, not from apostles, but from the Lord our Saviour himself; and has obtained eminency of power over all the church and all the flock of Christ, as He said himself to the apostle Peter, &c. And though assiduous prayers be offered before God for all men, the most blessed St. Paul promises the Romans in these words, with his own hand. "God is my witness, that without ceasing I make mention of *you* always in my prayers." The first see, *therefore*, by the celestial benefit, is that of the Roman church. There was some distinction of power among the apostles, and though all were

apostles, it was granted to Peter by the Lord (and they wished the same among themselves) that he should preside over the rest, and be *Cephas*, that is, *the head* (κεφαλη) and hold the princedom of the apostleship; and they have handed down the same form, to be observed by their successors, and other bishops. . . .' But this apostolical see was appointed the hinge and the head of all the churches by the Lord, and not by another; and as the gate is ruled by the hinge, so are all churches ruled by the authority of this holy see.

The great words of the Little Horn receive another illustration from the close of the decretal of Nicolas, prescribing the election of future popes by the cardinals.

But whosoever shall transgress this our decretal sentence, and confuse the Roman church by his presumption; let him be condemned with a perpetual curse and excommunication, and be counted with the wicked who shall not rise in the judgment. Let him feel the anger of the Almighty against him, and feel the fury of the apostles Peter and Paul, in this life and in the life to come. Let the merits of all the saints now in rest confound him, and let them in this life take open vengeance upon him. But the observers of this decree let the grace of the Almighty God protect, and the authority of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul free them from the bands of all their sins.

The changing of Divine laws is eminently conspicuous in the following Decretals :—

xxvii. 8. Calixtus II.

We entirely interdict priests, deacons, sub-deacons, and monks, from contracting marriages; *we decide also that*, according to the sacred canons, *the marriages contracted by persons of this kind be dissolved*, and the persons brought to do penance.

xxviii. 8. Innocent II.

We decree that those who in the order of sub-deacon and upward *have married wives or had concubines*, be deprived of ecclesiastical benefice. For since they ought to be the temple and vessels of the Lord, it is unworthy that they should serve uncleanness.

c. 6. It is not meet that any one be appointed to the priesthood in the bond of the marriage, unless he have promised a change.

c. 11. Let the wicked blush, and clearly understand that *by the judgment of the Holy Spirit*, they who are in sacred orders, presbyters, deacons, and sub-deacons, *unless they cast away their wives*, and live chastely, must be excluded from every step of dignity.

The following Decretals exhibit the enormous and blasphemous height to which the Popes, from age to age, carried their pretensions :—

xl. 1. Symmachus the Pope.

The blessed Peter gave *a perpetual dowry of merits, with the inheritance of innocency*, to his successors. For who can doubt that he is holy, whom the eminence of so great a dignity rears on high? Wherein, if the benefits acquired by merit are wanting, those suffice which are derived from the predecessor in that place. For he either advances to this eminence those who are renowned, or else makes those who are advanced illustrious.

xcvi. 5. Nicolas the Pope to Michael the emperor.

We are utterly ignorant how those who preside only in human affairs, and not in divine, can presume to judge those by whom things divine are ministered.

xcvi. 9. Gregory VII. to Herman, bishop of Metz.

Who can doubt that the priests of Christ are accounted the fathers and masters of kings, princes, and all the faithful? Is it not wretched madness, when the son strives to subjugate his father, the servant his master, and by unjust obligations to subject him to his own power, by whom he believes that he may be bound or loosed, not only in earth, but in heaven?

c. 10. THE SACRED AUTHORITY AND ROYAL POWER OF THE PONTIFFS GOVERN THE RULERS OF THIS WORLD.

Gelasius the Pope, to Anastasius the emperor.

You know then that you depend on their judgment, and that they may not be made subject to your will. Resting on such institutes and authorities, many pontiffs have excommunicated, some of them kings, and others even emperors. . . . St. Ambrose shows in his writings that gold is not so much more precious than lead, as the sacerdotal dignity is higher than that of kings.

c. 11. EMPERORS OUGHT TO OBEY, NOT TO RULE OVER, THE PONTIFFS.

Pope John.

If the emperor is catholic, he is a son of the church, not its head: he ought to learn, not to teach what belongs to religion. For God has willed that those things which are to be disposed of by the church, should belong to the priests, not to the secular powers; these he willed, if faithful, to be subject to the priests of their own church. Christian emperors ought to submit their mandates to ecclesiastical prelates, not to prefer their own mandates before them

xl. 6. Boniface the Martyr.

If the Pope is detected to be negligent of his own salvation,

and that of his brethren, careless and remiss in his works; and, being mute to what is good, *along with himself the foremost slave of hell, drags down innumerable shoals of people, to be scourged with many stripes for ever: no mortal may presume to chide his faults, because* HE IS HIMSELF TO JUDGE ALL MEN, AND TO BE JUDGED BY NONE, except he be found to have erred from the faith.

xl. 7. Nicolas the Pope, to the emperor.

It is evidently shewn that the pontiff can neither be bound nor loosed by the secular power; of whom it is certain, as we said long before, that by the pious prince Constantine, HE WAS STYLED GOD; AND IT IS MANIFEST THAT GOD CANNOT BE JUDGED BY MAN.

These extracts are surely enough to fix on the Papacy the character of the Little Horn, in boastful claims to Divine authority and absolute dominion. They are great words, and they are also spoken against the Most High: for hereby the Pope impiously assumes the Divine attributes, exalts his own decrees above kings, emperors, and even the inspired Scriptures; and last of all, assumes the very name of God, and on the strength of that title claims to be superior to all human judgment.

The forged donation of Constantine, also embodied in the Decretals, is however a proof equally striking, that fraud, impiety, and blasphemous claims to universal dominion, combine to brand the Papacy with the character of the little horn. It will be instructive to preface it with one verse from the New Testament.

Rev. xvii. 4. "And the woman was arrayed in *purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls*, having a *golden* cup in her hand, full of abominations."

Let us now compare the document itself, as it stands at full length in the papal code.

xl. 13. Constantine the Emperor conceded the crown and all the royal dignity in the city of Rome, and Italy, and all the parts of the West, to the apostolic see. For so it is read in the acts of the blessed Sylvester.

c. 14. Constantine the Emperor, in the fourth day of his baptism, gave this privilege to the Roman church, that the priests in all the Roman world have this for their head, as judges have the king. In that privilege among other things we read as follows:

'We have judged it useful, with all our satraps, senate, nobles, and all our people, that as the blessed Peter seems to be constituted the vicar of the Son of God on earth, so also the Pontiffs, who are vicegerents of that prince of apostles, obtain in grant from us and our empire, the princely power, more amply than the terrene gentleness of our imperial serenity seems to possess it; choosing to ourselves the prince of the apostles, or his vicars, for our firm patrons with God.

'And we decree that even as our earthly imperial majesty, so the most holy Roman church be honoured with veneration: and that the most holy see of the blessed Peter be gloriously exalted, more than our empire and earthly throne; rendering it power and exaltation of glory, and strength, and imperial honour. And we decree and confirm that it have principality over the four chief sees, as well as over all the churches of God in the whole world. And let the pontiff who for the time may preside over the holy Roman church, be higher than all the priests of the whole world, and *their prince;* and by his judgment let all things be disposed which relate to the worship of God, or the stability of Christian faith. To the churches of the blessed Peter and Paul we yield the sacred control, both in the east and in the west, the north and the south; in Judea, Greece, Asia, Thrace, Africa, Italy, and divers islands, in such sort that all things be disposed by the hands of our most blessed Father Sylvester, the supreme pontiff, and of his successors. To the blessed Sylvester, our Father, the supreme Pontiff, Pope of the whole city of Rome, and all the Pontiffs his successors, who to the end of time shall sit in the see of blessed Peter, we now give the Lateran palace of our empire; next *the diadem*, or *crown* of our head, also the Phrygian, and superhumeral or collar, which is wont to surround the emperor's neck; and also *the purple cloak* and *the scarlet tunic*, and all the imperial robes; conveying further the dignity of the imperial presidents, and the imperial sceptre, and also all the insignia and *banda*, and various imperial ornaments: and all the pomp of imperial elevation, and the glory of our power. And as the imperial soldiery are adorned, so we decree that the clergy of the holy Roman church be adorned likewise. And as the imperial power is honoured by various offices of chamberlains and porters, and all the variety of guards, so do we will that the holy Roman church be decorated. And that the pontifical glory may shine forth in highest refulgence, we decree that the horses of the clergy of the same holy Roman church be adorned with white trappings, and that in this guise they ride forth. And as our senate uses sandals decorated with white, so let the clergy also use them; that both heavenly and earthly things may be decorated to the glory of God. We decree this also, that our most

holy Father, Sylvester, and his successors, use the *diadem*, namely, the crown which we have granted to him from our head, made *of the purest gold, and with precious gems*, and wear it on their head to the praise of God in honour of St. Peter. And that the pontifical dignity may not be lightly esteemed, but honoured with glory and power more than the dignity of earthly empires, behold, we give and resign to the same blessed Pontiff, Sylvester, the universal pope, both our palace, as said before, and the Roman city, and all the provinces, countries, and cities of Italy, and the western regions; and decree that they be disposed of by him and his successors, and we yield them to the perpetual controul of the Roman church. Whence we have thought it meet that our empire and the power of the kingdom be transferred into the eastern regions; and a city built at Byzantium with our name, and our empire be placed there; since where the princedom of the priests, and the head of the Christian religion has been appointed by the heavenly emperor, it is not just that there any earthly emperor should have power. These things we have enjoined and confirmed: and we decree that they continue unimpeached and unshaken to the end of the world. Whence *we protest before the living God and his terrible judyment*, to all the emperors our ancestors, the nobles, governors, senators, and all the people of the whole world, now and for ever, that to none of them shall it be lawful in any way to infringe these things, or in any point to distrust them. But if any one, which we do not believe, shall break them or despise them, *let him lie bound under eternal damnation; let him find the saints of God, the princes of the apostles, Peter and Paul, his adversaries in the present life, and in the life to come, and let him perish burned in the lowest hell, with the Devil, and all the wicked.* Confirming the page of this our imperial decree with our own hands, we have placed it over the venerable corps of the blessed Peter, prince of the apostles. Given at Rome, the third of the Calends of April, our Lord Flavius Constantine Augustus, for the fourth time, and Gallicanus being consuls.

Did the world ever witness a more monstrous and awful combination of forgery and blasphemy, and hideous mockery of the living God, than this solemn appeal to his terrible judgment, in the very heart of a deliberate and barefaced lie? The Christian of any feeling must read it almost with a thrill of shuddering and horror, while he remembers the inspired echo to this profane appeal.—Through covetousness *with feigned words shall they make merchandize of you*, whose judgment now of

a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

A few more extracts may complete the evidence, which proves the complete resemblance between the assumptions of the papacy, and the great words of the little horn.

xxiv. i. 15. It is permitted neither to think nor to speak differently from the Roman church.

i. 10. The faith of the Roman church has destroyed all heresies and cherishes none.

i. 12. Appeal must be made to the Roman church whenever the rule of faith is sought unto.

i. 16. The Roman church above all the rest, has been zealous for the Christian religion.

i. 17. The Roman church by the profession of its faith, cuts off the ear of error.

i. 33. He who is separate from the apostolic see, does not consecrate another, but inflicts a curse.

xxv. i. 16. THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH IMPARTS AUTHORITY TO THE SACRED CANONS, BUT IS NOT BOUND BY THEM. For it has the right of framing canons; since it is *the head and hinge of all the churches from whose law no one may dissent.* In such sort then it gives authority to the canons, as not to be subject itself to them. But *as Christ*, who gave the law, himself fulfilled it in the letter, yet *to shew himself lord of the law*, healed the leper by touch, against the letter of the law *; so the pontiffs of the highest see* shew reverence to the canons framed by themselves or others; but sometimes *by commanding or acting otherwise, shew themselves the lords and framers of the decrees.* Therefore in the former chapters there is imposed ON OTHERS THE NECESSITY OF OBEYING; but IN THE SUPREME PONTIFFS there is shewn to be THE AUTHORITY OF ENJOINING OBSERVANCE. It may therefore allow to itself special privileges against general decrees, and yield as a special favour what by a general decree is forbidden.

Gregory IX. Decretals.

II. i. 12. THE POPE ALONE, AND NO OTHER, DETERMINES DOUBTS ABOUT THE PRIVILEGES OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE.

Innocent III.

When the cause turns on the privileges of the apostolic see, we do not choose that judgment be passed on them by others.

Sixti Decret. I. 6.

c. 17. Nicolas III.

The Lord has willed that the sacrament of his gift should belong in such sort to all the apostles, as to place it principally in the blessed

Peter, highest of all the apostles ; that from him as a head, he might pour down his own gifts on the whole body. For *receiving him into the fellowship of his own undivided unity*, he would have him named by his own title, saying, Thou art Peter, &c. ; that the building of the eternal temple, reared of God, might by a wonderful gift of God's grace, rest on the firmness of Peter, to whom the wonderful provision of our Saviour joined the blessed Paul. . . . These are they who have consecrated the city itself unto Christ the Lord, by the glorious blood of their martyrdom. These are they who have raised it to such glory, that it is *the holy nation, the chosen people, the priestly and royal city ;* by the see of the blessed Peter MADE THE HEAD OF THE WHOLE WORLD. And lest the mother church, in the gathering and nurture of the faithful, should lack temporal succour, but that rather, being helped by these, might always advance with spiritual increase ; it is conceived to have happened not without a miracle, that the weakness of Constantine, the monarch, foreseen of God, and cured by the medicine of baptism, added as it were some firmness to the church itself ; who on the fourth day of his baptism, with all his princes, senate, nobles, and all the people, in the person of the blessed Sylvester, by conceding to him the Roman city, declared in a pragmatic sanction, that it was to be disposed of by him and his successors ; decreeing to the Roman pontiffs the sovereignty of both kinds in the city itself ; not accounting it just, that where the celestial emperor had appointed the princedom of the priesthood, and the head of the Christian religion, there any earthly emperor should have power ; but rather that the see of St. Peter, placed in the Roman soil as its own, should enjoy full liberty in all things, *and not be subject to any man, since by the divine mouth it is known to be* EXALTED ABOVE ALL.

V. ii. 2. Alexander IV.

We forbid also that any layman dispute, *either in private or in public*, concerning the Catholic faith. Whoever acts contrary to this law, let him be bound with the cord of excommunication.

ii. 18. Boniface VIII.

Temporal lords must not resist, but altogether obey, the bishops and inquisitors of heresy. If any one of the powers or temporal lords presume to oppose or hinder the bishop or inquisitor, let him know that he is smitten with the sword of excommunication ; and if he persevere for one year, let him be condemned as a heretic.

Clement. Decret. II, ix. 1.

Clement V. in the Council of Vienne.

The Roman princes, professors of the orthodox faith, venerating with fervour of faith and pure devotion the holy Roman church, of which Christ is the head, and the Roman pontiff, the vicar of

the Redeemer, have not thought it unworthy to submit their heads to the same Roman pontiff, from whom they receive the approbation of their person, as fit to be assumed to the imperial eminence; also unction, confirmation, and the crown of the empire; and have bound themselves to him, and to that same church which transferred the empire from the Greeks to the Germans, by the bond of an oath; as both the custom of ancient observance renewed in recent times, and the form of this oath inserted in the sacred canons declare. But because the aforesaid Henry, of late days, not weighing the virtue and meaning, but the mere rind of the words, and confounding the sense, restraining curiously the forenamed oath, seemed to assert that they do not extend to the debt of fealty: we, for these and other reasons, that no emperor may hereafter venture to move a doubt, whether these oaths rendered by the said Henry the Emperor and his successors, are oaths of fealty; by our apostolic authority, with advice of our brethren, declare that the forenamed oaths both are and ought to be reckoned, oaths of fealty.

The following extravagant of Boniface VIII. may perhaps be viewed as the climax and key-stone to this mighty fabric of blasphemous pretension, audacity, and fraud.

Extravag. I. viii. 1.

Boniface VIII.

ALL THE FAITHFUL OF CHRIST, BY NECESSITY OF SALVATION, ARE SUBJECT TO THE ROMAN PONTIFF, WHO HAS BOTH SWORDS, AND JUDGES ALL MEN, BUT IS JUDGED BY NO ONE.

We are compelled, by the call of faith, to believe and hold one Catholic and apostolic church, and this we firmly believe and simply profess; out of which there is no salvation nor remission of sins, even as the spouse in Canticles proclaims, my dear, my undefiled is one. For there was one ark in the time of the deluge, prefiguring the one church; finished in one cubit above, and having one, that is Noah, for its ruler and governor. . . . This is that coat of the Lord, woven without seam, not to be rent, but parted by lot. Therefore of this one and only church there is one body, and one head; not two heads, like a monster, but Christ and Peter the vicar of Christ, and the successor of Peter; the Lord himself saying to Peter, Feed my sheep; and generally, not specially these or those; by which he is seen to have committed all to him. If therefore the Greeks or others say that they are not committed to Peter and his successors, they must needs confess that they are not of the sheep of Christ; since the Lord says in St. John, There

is one fold and one shepherd. In the power of which successor we are taught by the evangelical sayings, that there are two swords, the spiritual and the temporal. For when the apostles said, Behold here, that is, in the church, there are two swords, the Lord did not answer that there were too many, but merely enough. Certainly he who denies that the temporal sword is in the power of Peter, attends little to that word of the Lord, saying, Put *thy* sword into its sheath. Each, then, is in the power of the church, the spiritual and the material sword. But one is to be used *for*, the other *by* the church; one by the hand of the priest, the other by the hand of kings and soldiers, but at the nod and permission of the priest. But sword must be under sword, and the temporal authority be subject to the spiritual power. For when the apostle says, The powers which be are ordained of God, they would not be ordained, or set in order, unless sword were under sword. . . . The truth bearing witness, the spiritual power has to appoint the earthly power, and to give sentence against it, if it be not good. Thus the prophecy of Jeremy is verified in the church and the ecclesiastical power.—See, I have set thee this day over nations and kingdoms. Therefore, if the earthly power turns aside, it will be judged by the spiritual power; and if a spiritual inferior, by his superior. But if the highest spiritual power turn aside, it can be judged by God alone, not by man; since the apostle bears witness,—The spiritual man judgeth all things, but he himself is judged by no man. And this authority is not human, though given to man, and exercised by man, but rather divine, given by the divine mouth to Peter, himself and his successors, in Him whom he confessed to be a firm rock, the Lord saying to Peter himself, Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven. Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God; unless he pretend, as the Manichees, that there are two beginnings, which we judge false and heretical, because, as Moses testifies, not *in beginnings*, but *in the beginning* God created heaven and earth! *Moreover we declare, assert, define, and pronounce, that* TO BE SUBJECT TO THE ROMAN PONTIFF IS TO EVERY HUMAN CREATURE ALTOGETHER NECESSARY FOR SALVATION. Given at the Lateran, in the eighth year of our Pontificate.

This evidence, drawn from the Popish Decretals alone, and which might be increased tenfold by including the language of the Papal Bulls, the decisions of canonists, and sentences of Romish orators and divines, is enough and more than enough to prove, on this first count, the fulfilment of the prophecy. The little horn, who should

arise in the latter times of the fourth empire, has a mouth speaking great things, and speaks great words against the Most High. The Pope of Rome claims inspiration, supreme authority over kings and emperors, and even Divine honours. His words are to be received as the words of God. The title of God, he declares, is piously given to him, and he is above all human judgment, and EXALTED ABOVE ALL. No laws or canons may bind him, because he is superior to them all. The Scriptures themselves derive their authority from his sanction. Implicit obedience to his will is the only way of salvation. These are indeed great words against the Most High, claims of higher and more revolting blasphemy than perhaps, had ever before been witnessed in this fallen world ; and aggravated by perseverance in the sin through a long succession of ages, and in spite of the most solemn denunciations of the word of God.

One plea alone can be urged, to parry the sharp sword of the Spirit, which in this vision pierces right through the leviathan of papal ambition and pride. The Pope, it is said, does not profess to be the enemy of Christ, but His vicar ; not to speak great words against the Most High, but on His behalf. All his own authority he professes to receive from above, for the glory of God, and the unity of his Church, and the edification of the body of Christ. While the fundamental doctrines of the faith are retained, the papacy, it is affirmed, cannot justly be deemed the power which is pourtrayed in these fearful colours.

The answer to this objection is simple and plain. The vision reveals to us stern realities, not slippery and variable professions. It tells us what the little horn will really do, and discloses his true features, rather than the mask which he may choose to wear. If the great words spoken are really against the Most High, it matters not to the truth of the prophecy under what specious pretence they may be uttered. Evil seldom or never proclaims itself as evil. Its very nature is to use some pretext and show of good. Delusion is the breath of its

life ; and it would cease to be evil, when it should cease to be deceitful and false. The heathen idolaters believed the objects of their worship to be divine. The Jews in the wilderness, when they worshipped the golden calf at the foot of the Mount, in their own view were holding a feast to Jehovah. Saul, in his foul perjury and murder committed against the Gibeonites, thought himself zealous for the Lord. The Pharisees professed to be full of zeal against blasphemy, when they crucified the Son of God ; and fancied they were doing God service, while they murdered His apostles and His holy martyrs. If a false profession, joined to a seared conscience are allowed to reverse the nature of crime, the foundations are destroyed, and what can the righteous do ? It will then be easy to excuse every sin and blasphemy which has ever issued from the heart of fallen man. Our business, then, as interpreters, is with the true character of the little horn, and not with deceitful professions. The Scriptures deal with realities, not with names ; with the true nature of men's actions, and not with the fair pretences by which they may be disguised. For "the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is discerning in the thoughts and intents of the heart."

The truth, indeed, of the interpretation, which refers the little horn to the papacy, is only confirmed by the thick veil of sophistry under which the "great words" of pride and blasphemy have been disguised. The reality is not altered ; but the danger of deception to the church is increased tenfold. The need for a divine caution is thus more apparent and manifest. All the precedents of Scripture confirm this view. Seldom or never are the disciples warned, in the gospels, against the open idolatry of the Gentiles ; time after time they are warned against the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees. In the epistles just the same contrast appears. The warnings against the sins of heathenism are

far less frequent than those which are aimed against Jewish corruptions or internal heresies. Hence the very reason for which some would divert this prophecy to some future and infidel power, only confirms its application to the papal dominion. The evil is here far more lasting, its character more seductive ; and hence there is tenfold need of a divine caution against a danger so perilous to the church of God.

Let us suppose a rebel, in some distant province, to forge the royal seal and handwriting, and pretend to act in the name of the sovereign. He then claims to himself entire and unreserved allegiance. He abrogates whatever laws he pleases, and enacts contrary ones in their room. He enforces his own statutes by the severest punishments against those who still adhere to the old laws of the kingdom. He clothes himself with the robes of state, applies to himself the royal titles, claims immunity from the laws even of his own enacting ; and pretends that all the statutes derive their sole force from his sanction, and must borrow their meaning from his interpretation. Last of all, he banishes, strips of their goods, imprisons, and puts to death, all those subjects who abide by the laws of the king and reject his usurpation. Surely, in this case, the pretence of governing in the monarch's name does not excuse, but aggravates the rebellion. It lessens greatly, it is true, the guilt of the deceived subjects, but increases, in the same proportion, the crime of their deceiver. And if simple minds were deluded by his impudent claims, and mistook his forgery for a real commission ; in such a case we might well look for some proclamation from the court of the king, far more than in the daring conquests of an open invader. These direct, hostile inroads would require arms only to repel them. The faithful soldiers of the king would be sent at once to chastise the aggression. But to crush a rebellion so artfully disguised, further means would be employed. A wise and paternal sovereign would be careful first to unmask the delusion, and by open proclamation disclose the wicked forgery

practised on his seal and his name. Then, and not before, when simple and loyal hearts could be deceived no longer, when the rebellion was stripped of its disguise, and no alternative left but repentance or open treason, we might expect the patient warning of love to be exchanged for the armies of vengeance, and the sword of righteous execution to go forth against the leaders of rebellion.

Such is the true nature of the present vision. It is a warning in clear language, from the king of heaven, that in the latter times, after the Roman empire is divided, a power of these high and daring pretensions will arise to vex and harass the church of Christ. It is an indignant protest from the upper sanctuary against those enormous fictions and impious frauds on which, from first to last, the papal supremacy has been reared. And it is also a faithful warning to all the obstinate adherents and followers of papal idolatries, of the divine sentence pronounced against this doomed system of evil. For "the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end."

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHARACTER OF THE LITTLE HORN.

THE PAPAL PERSECUTIONS.

DAN. VII. 25.—"AND SHALL WEAR OUT THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH, AND THINK TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS; AND THEY SHALL BE GIVEN INTO HIS HAND, UNTIL A TIME AND TIMES, AND THE DIVIDING OF A TIME."

THESE words reveal to us a second feature in the character of the little horn, systematic persecution of the saints of God. It will be the object of this chapter to examine how far the description can be justly applied to the Church of Rome.

That the papacy is, in its very essence, a persecuting system, is too plain to admit of doubt: its own advocates glory in the fact, as one great merit of their church. Two points, however, remain open to controversy; first whether the saints of God have been among the objects of that persecution, or heretics only; and next, whether it is so essential to Popery as a system, and in practice, began so early and lasted so long, as to fulfil the words of the inspired description. To solve these difficulties we must trace, in order, the definition of heresy in the Roman church, the laws enacted against heretics, and their practical execution from age to age. Last of all, those objections which have been raised will be shortly examined.

The definition of heresy in the Church of Rome may be gathered conclusively from the following extracts

taken from the authorized documents, laws, and decrees of the papacy.

Decret. II. xxii.

v. 42. Pelagius the Pope.

Let not the vain speeches of men deter you—who say that the church persecutes, while she represses those things which are committed. They err, who prate idly in this manner. No one persecutes, but he who compels to evil. The authority of canonical Scripture, and the truth of the rules given by our fathers, teach us that schism is an evil, and that men of this kind must be repressed by external power. *Whoever is separated from the apostolic see, is doubtless in schism*, and strives to set up an altar against the universal church. Do then yourselves what we often exhort, knowing your Christian purpose; and take pains that they who have presumed to commit such things, be brought in fit custody to the most pious prince.

The same definition re-appears in another letter, embodied in the same canons.

v. 43. Pelagius to Narses the Patrician.

What shall I say of the Ligurian, Venetian and Istrian bishops? whom it is fit that you should repress by your excellence and power, and *you suffer them to glory in their rustic folly, in contempt of the apostolic see.* Do not hesitate to compress men of this kind by the princely and judicial power, because the rules of the fathers have especially enjoined this; *that* if any one erect another altar, or make a schism, he be excommunicated and condemned; and if he despise this, *he be crushed by the public powers.*

Here we see that a want of absolute submission to the Roman see, without other offence or false doctrine so much as pretended, is made a full warrant for the sword of persecution.

v. 44. Pelagius the Pope.

Both divine and human laws have decreed that *they who are divided from the unity of the church*, and wickedly disturb its peace, *be repressed even by secular power.*

II. xxv. l. 5.

Damasus the Pope.

They who willingly violate the canons are condemned by the Holy Spirit; since they blaspheme the Holy Ghost, who presume

to speak against those sacred canons, or consent willingly to those who so teach. Such presumption is evidently a kind of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, because it rebels against him by whose direction and grace those sacred canons are published.

This is the same Pope whose election was signalized by the murder of one hundred and thirty-seven of the partizans of his rival, in the Basilica of Sicininus. But though wholesale murder may have been a light offence in his eyes, nothing less than blasphemy against the Holy Ghost will serve to describe a neglect of the papal laws and canons. The words furnish us, then, with another practical definition of heresy in the Roman church.

xxiv. 1. 15.

It is permitted neither to think nor to speak differently from the Roman church.

This is one of the canons which it is blasphemy to violate; and therefore, also, the offence must be punishable as a deadly heresy.

xxiv. 2. 28.

Nicolas the Pope in the Roman council.

If any one shall presume to dispute the dogmas, commands, interdicts, sanctions, or decrees, wholesomely published by the head of the apostolic see, let him be accursed.

Gregory IX. Decretals.

v. 7, 3. Lucius III.

All those who are not afraid to think or teach otherwise than the holy Roman church observes and teaches, concerning the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, or baptism, or the confession of sins, matrimony, and the other ecclesiastical sacraments; and generally, whomsoever the same Roman church, or its separate bishops, point out as heretics, upon these we fasten the bond of a perpetual curse.

v. 2. 8. Alexander IV.

He who has erred in one kind of heresy or *article of the faith, or sacrament of the church*, and afterwards renounced simply and generally; if he then offend in another article or sacrament, is accounted relapsed.

2. 18. Boniface VIII.

If any one of the powers or temporal lords presume to oppose or hinder the bishop or inquisitor, let him know that he is smitten with the sword of excommunication; and if he persevere for one year, let him be condemned as a heretic.

Extrav. I, 8. 1.
Boniface VIII.

WE DECLARE, ASSERT, DEFINE, AND PRONOUNCE THAT TO BE SUBJECT TO THE ROMAN PONTIFF IS TO EVERY HUMAN CREATURE ALTOGETHER NECESSARY FOR SALVATION.

Such is the definition of heresy, or its equivalent, punishable schism, which the Romish decrees everywhere supply. It is absolute, unconditional surrender of the faith, the conscience, and the thoughts, to the Roman church, in all her councils, canons, decrees, her definitions of faith, doctrine of the sacraments, and idolatrous practices—nay, even in her actual persecutions. Whatever is short of this is heresy, punishable by her laws, which may be enforced at once, whenever there cease to be politic reasons of forbearance.

Let us next inquire into the actual punishments denounced against the heretics who come within the range of this comprehensive definition. These will throw some light on the prophetic description, and prepare us for the facts which history reveals. The following extracts from the Papal laws throw a clear and steady light on the true principles of the Church of Rome.

II. xxiii. 4. 48.

Gregory the Pope, to Gennadius the Patrician.

As warriors of the Lord, you fight bravely the battles of the church. For it is known that heretics, if they have, which God forbid, licence to hurt, rise vehemently against the Catholic faith, and transfuse the venom of their heresy, to waste if possible the members of the Christian body. For we know that they stiffen their necks against the Catholic church, and seek to pervert the Christian faith; but let your eminence compress their attempts, and weigh down their necks with the yoke of rectitude.

5, 43. Pelagius to Narses the Patrician.

See, my lord, because your mind perhaps is timid lest you should seem to persecute, I have taken pains to set before you these authorities of the Fathers; and there are a thousand other examples, that they who make schisms in the church ought to be restrained by the public powers, not only with exile, but proscription of their goods, and severe imprisonment.

5. 44. Pelagius the Pope.

There is nothing by which you can offer a greater sacrifice to

God, than to ordain that they who thus riot to their own and others' destruction, be crushed with needful vigour.

The following decree, it must be observed, applies equally to crusades against heretics.

5. 46. In a conflict with unbelievers, whoever dies merits the heavenly kingdoms.

Nicolas the Pope to the army of the Franks.

We would have every one of you, dearly beloved, to know that whoever of you dies faithfully in this conflict of war (we name it as not desiring it) *the celestial kingdom will by no means be denied him.*

The decree which next follows may perhaps help to explain the unhappy state of our own empire.

5. 47. Urban II. to Bishop Gofred.

Enjoin some limit of fit satisfaction, according to their purpose, to the slayers of the excommunicated: *For we do not count them murderers, who, burning with the zeal of their Catholic mother against the excommunicate, may happen to have slain some of them!* But that the discipline of the same mother church be not deserted, enjoin them such moderate penance as we have said; that they may appease the eyes of the Divine simplicity, if perchance, by human frailty, in that deed they have fallen into any double-mindedness.

Gregor. Decret.

II. ii. 1. Innocent III.

Let no judge presume to condemn a presbyter, deacon, or any of the clergy, without the permission of the supreme pontiff. If he do this, let him be excommunicate till he acknowledge and amend his crime.

v. vii. 3. Lucius III.

We decree by this present ordinance, that whoever shall be manifestly taken in heresy shall be given up to the judgment of the secular power, unless he shall return of his own accord to the unity of the Catholic faith. As for those who, after abjuring their error, shall be found to have relapsed into the abjured heresy, we decree that these shall be left, without any hearing whatever, to the secular power.

We enjoin further, that the counts, barons, rulers, consuls of cities and other places, promise with a personal oath that they will faithfully and effectually assist the church, according to their duty and power, against heretics and their accomplices. If they refuse to do this, let them be despoiled of their honours, bound with an excommunication, and their lands put under the interdict of the church.

Among the foremost, we place under a perpetual curse the Cathari and Paterins, and those who under a false name call them-

selves humbled or poor men of Lyons, the Passagins, Metopins, and Arnaldists.

We decree further that they who receive or defend, or give any help or patronage to the forenamed heretics, lie under the same sentence.

v. vii. 10. Innocent III.

In the lands subject to our temporal jurisdiction, we decree that the goods of heretics be put to sale; and in other lands we command the same to be done by the powers and secular princes; and we ordain that they be summoned to their duty if they are negligent, by ecclesiastical censure; and we command that neither their goods be restored to them, unless they renounce the company of heretics, nor that any one pity them: so that temporal punishment may at least seize on them, when spiritual discipline does not restore them.

v. vii. 16. Gregory IX. to the Archbishop of Milan.

LET THOSE UNDERSTAND THEMSELVES TO BE ABSOLVED *from the debt of fidelity, homage, and all manner of service*, WHO WERE BOUND BY ANY COMPACT, HOWEVER FIRMLY RATIFIED, TO THOSE WHO HAVE MANIFESTLY FALLEN INTO HERESY.

v. vii. 15. The same.

We excommunicate and curse all heretics, Cathari, Paterins, poor men of Lyons, Passagins, Tossepins, Arnaldists, Speronists, and others, by whatever names they are called; which have their faces different, but their tails joined in one. When condemned by the church, let them be left to the secular judgment, to be duly punished, the clergy being first degraded from their orders.

v. ii. 4. Alexander IV.

Relapsed heretics are to be delivered to the secular power, even though they repent; yet the sacraments of penance and the eucharist are not to be denied them.

v. ii. 8. The same.

One accused of heresy, against whom a great and strong suspicion of the crime has arisen, if he abjure heresy upon trial, and afterwards fall into it, ought by a kind of fiction to be accounted relapsed, though before his abjuration the crime of heresy was not fully proved.

Though the perjured are repelled from bearing witness, even after repentance, yet if those who before inquisitors have foresworn themselves by concealing heresy, wish afterwards to correct their sayings, by deposing against themselves or their accomplices; if it appear manifest that they wish to correct their testimony, not through levity, hatred, or bribes, but out of zeal for the orthodox faith, and to reveal what before they kept secret, in favour to the faith, their witness must be held valid both against themselves and others.

The following decrees carry the power of the inquisition into every nook and corner of the Papal monarchy.

v. ii. 9. Urban IV.

We decree that any statute of city, fort, villa, or any other place, by which the business of inquisition into heresy is directly or indirectly impeded, or in any way retarded, is of no force. . . . and that they be compelled by ecclesiastical censure to revoke it entirely, or at least alter it, so that there be no hindrance to the process of inquisition.

v. ii. 18. Boniface VIII.

Temporal lords must not resist, but altogether obey, the bishops and inquisitors of heresy, and not themselves judge in any way of that crime. If any one of the powers or temporal lords presume to oppose or hinder the bishop or inquisitor, let him know that he is smitten with the sword of excommunication, and if he persevere for one year, let him be condemned as a heretic.

. v. ii. 19. The same.

We decree, by the council of our brethren, that the goods of heretics, (whose offence is more grave, horrible, and detestable, than that of the incestuous) be of very right confiscated. But princes and other temporal lords must not execute this confiscation, until the sentence on the crime has been published by the bishop.

Clementin II. ix. 1.

Clement IV. in the council of Vienne.

After the part before quoted, under the Papal claims of supremacy, the Pope continues—

Moreover, beside the said oaths, the same Henry, before he might enter Italy, promised and confirmed on the holy gospels, that he would reverently preserve and defend the same church, faithfully and with all his might; and *according to his power exterminate every heresy, or schism, and all heretics, their favourers, receivers and defenders;* and never have any union or confederacy with any one hostile or rebellious to the said church, *or manifestly suspected by it;* but preserve and defend our person, honour, and rank, and that of our successors, against all men of whatever rank or eminence.

Systematic persecution, and even extermination, of all who dissent from the see of Rome, is in these words enjoined by the Pope, under solemn oaths, on the Emperor himself, and on all subordinate powers.

Extrav. I. 1.
John XXII.

The Roman Pontiff, appointed by the Lord over nations and kingdoms, since he cannot personally go round every region, must of necessity send legates to various parts of the world. But some, endeavouring to reduce under their own will this power of the Roman Pontiff, which he has, not from man, but from God, do not suffer his legates to enter their lands, except they themselves request it. We, thoroughly condemning by apostolic authority this custom, so injurious to souls, and which derogates from apostolic power, decree that these legates must be admitted by all, of whatever pre-eminence, rank, or station. Let those who presume to hinder the said legates or nuncios incur, *ipso facto*, the sentence of excommunication. Let the kingdoms, lands, and places subject to the same, be put under ecclesiastical interdict, so long as they persist in such contumacy; notwithstanding any indulgences or privileges granted by this see itself, to emperors, kings, or any others, of whatsoever mode, tenor, or form; which, it is our will, shall avail no one against this decree.

We now come to that noted instrument of cruelty, the third canon of the fourth Lateran Council. This document has indeed been contested by some Romish authors; but it is embodied in the code of Decretals repeatedly approved by the Popes; and, in Mr. Evans' recent work, its authenticity and canonical authority have been proved by an overwhelming variety of evidence.

Innocent III. in the Lateran council.

Of heretics. We excommunicate and curse every heresy that exalts itself against this holy, orthodox, Catholic faith, which we have set forth above; condemning all heretics, by whatever names they are called, for though they differ in face, they have their tails joined together, because they agree in their vanity.

When condemned, let them be delivered to the secular powers who are present, or to their bailiff, to be visited with due punishment; the clergy being first degraded from their orders; and let the goods of those who are condemned, if laymen, be confiscated; if clergy, be applied to the use of the churches where they officiated.

Let those who are noted by suspicion only, unless according to the nature of the suspicion, and quality of the person, they show their innocence by a fitting proof, be struck with the sword of anathema, and avoided by all men until due satisfaction; and if they persist a year under excommunication, then let them be condemned as heretics.

Let the secular powers be monished and invited, and if need be, compelled by ecclesiastical censures, whatever offices they may hold, that as they desire to be reckoned and accounted faithful, so they take a public oath for the defence of the faith, that in good faith, and to the utmost of their power, they will strive to root out, from the lands subject to them, all heretics branded by the church; so that at once, whenever any one is assumed into any office, spiritual or temporal, he shall be bound to confirm this engagement by an oath.

But if the temporal lord, being required and monished by the church, shall neglect to purge his land from this heretical foulness, let him be bound by the metropolitan and the other bishops of the province with the bond of excommunication. And if he neglect to make satisfaction for one year, let this be announced to the supreme pontiff; that he may declare his vassals to be thenceforward absolved from their fealty, and offer his land to be seized upon by the Catholics, who, exterminating the heretics, may possess it without any contradiction, and preserve it in purity of faith, saving the right of the principal lord, if only he present no obstacle, and oppose no hindrance; the same law being no less observed in the case of those who have no principal lord.

Let the Catholics, who after taking the sign of the cross, devote themselves to the extermination of heretics, enjoy the same indulgence, and be protected with the same holy privilege which is granted to those who go to the succour of the holy land.

We decree, further, that they who believe in heretics, and further, those who receive, defend and favour them, lie under excommunication; firmly enjoining that after any such person has been excommunicated, if he neglect to make satisfaction within a year, he shall then at once be made infamous, and not admitted to any public offices or councils, nor as an elector to such offices, nor as a witness. Let him have no power to make a will, nor to receive a succession by inheritance. Let no one have to make defence against him in any cause, but let him be compelled to defend himself from others. If perchance he is a judge, let his sentence have no validity, nor any causes be brought to him for a hearing. If he be an advocate, let his advocacy be rejected, and the like we enjoin in all similar cases. But if he be a clerk, let him be deposed from every office and benefice, and as his fault is weightier, so be also his punishment.

But if any fail to avoid the company of such persons, after they have been denounced by the church, let them be struck with the sentence of excommunication, till they offer full satisfaction. Let not the clergy offer to these pestilent men the sacraments of the church, nor presume to give them Christian burial, nor receive

their alms or oblations; else let them be deprived of their office, and not restored without a special license of the apostolic see. So also with regulars, on whom let this further punishment be laid, that their privileges be annulled in that diocese where they have presumed to commit such excesses.

And because some under a form of godliness, but, as the apostle says, "denying the power thereof," assume to themselves the license of preaching, when the same apostle says, How shall they preach except they be sent? let all who presume, in public or private to exercise the office of preaching, when prohibited or not sent, without license from the apostolic see or the Catholic bishop of the place, be bound with the chain of excommunication, and unless they quickly repent, be visited with some other due punishment.

We enjoin, moreover, that every archbishop or bishop, by himself or by his archdeacon, or fit and honest person, twice, or at least once in the year go round each parish, in which it is reported that heretics dwell; and there let him compel three or more men of good credit to swear, or even, if it seems expedient, the whole neighbourhood; that if any one knows of heretics there, or any who hold secret conventicles, *or differ from the common conversation, life, and manners of the faithful*, he be ready to point them out to the bishop. Let the bishop himself summon the accused to his presence, and if they do not purge themselves from the alleged crime, or if they after such expurgation relapse into their former perfidy, let them be cononically punished. But if any of them with damnable obstinacy reject the bond of an oath, and refuse to swear, for this very cause let them be accounted heretics.

We will, therefore, and command, and in virtue of their obedience strictly enjoin, that bishops through their dioceses watch with diligence to execute these things efficaciously, if they would escape canonical vengeance. But if any bishop be negligent or remiss in purging his diocese from the leaven of heretical pravity; when this is confirmed by sure tokens, let him both be deposed from the episcopal office, and another fit person substituted in his place, who may have both the will and the power to confound all heretical wickedness.

Such were the decrees and public ordinances of the Roman church for the extermination of all heretics, or in other words, of all who rejected any of its doctrines, or refused entire obedience to its will, in the days of its unbroken power before the Reformation. Its spirit and tone were unchanged by that great event. The will to exterminate was the same; but the providence of God

then interposed to fix a limit to its power. It will be enough to adduce three historical documents of later days, invested with the infallible authority of the head of the Church, and which illustrate the unchanged maxims of the Papacy in modern times. The first is that bull of Leo the Tenth, which proved the occasion of the Church's deliverance. It was the same Pope who uttered the well-known speech, 'How profitable this fable of Jesus Christ has been to us!' And yet with what 'great words' does he speak in this document to protect the vile, but profitable frauds, of Tetzel and the indulgences, and to quench the reviving light of the pure and everlasting Gospel!

Leo the bishop, servant of the servants of God, *for the perpetual memory of the business.* Rise up, Lord, and judge thy cause, be mindful of thy adversaries, of the things which are done by the foolish all the day. Incline thine ear to our prayers. For there have arisen foxes to waste the vineyard, of which thou hast trodden the winepress alone, and when ascending to the Father, didst commit the care, government, and administration of the same to Peter as its head and thy vicar, and to his successors, after the model of the triumphant church,—the wild boar out of the wood strives to waste it, and a singular beast devours it.

Rise, O Peter, and for the pastoral care, divinely committed to thee, as said before, look on the cause of the holy Roman church, the mother of all churches, and the mistress of the faith, which thou, by the will of God, hast consecrated with thy blood. Against which, as thou hast deigned to warn us, there rise up false teachers that bring in damnable heresies, and bring upon themselves swift destruction; whose tongue is a fire, an unruly evil, full of deadly poison; who have bitter envying and strife in their hearts, and boast and lie against the truth.

Arise thou also, O Paul, we entreat thee, who hast enlightened it and made it illustrious by thy own doctrine and joint martyrdom. For now there arises a new Porphyry, who, as he of old unjustly reviled the holy apostles, so does this man, contrary to thy doctrine, not with intreaties but reproaches, revile and tear the holy pontiffs our predecessors, and where he distrusts his cause, does not fear to go onward to reviling, after the custom of heretics, whose last refuge it is, when they see that their cause will be condemned, to spread with their tongue the poison of the serpent, and when they feel themselves vanquished, to betake themselves eagerly to rail-

ing. For though thou hast told us, heresies must needs be, for the trial of the faithful, yet that they may not grow, nor the foxes join together in one, they must needs be extinguished in their very rise, by thy help and intercession.

Finally, let all the saints arise, and the rest of the universal church, whose true interpretation of holy writ being set aside, some, whose mind the father of lies has blinded, after the old maxims of heretics, being wise in their own conceit, interpret, or rather torture and adulterate the same Scriptures, otherwise than the Holy Spirit requires, namely, by their private sense, for the sake of ambition and popular favour. So that, as Jerome says, it is now not the gospel of Christ, but of man; or what is worse, of the Devil. Let the holy church of God, I say, arise, and with the forenamed holy apostles intercede with Almighty God, that the errors of His sheep being purged away, and all heresies being rooted from the bounds of the faithful, He may deign to preserve peace and unity to His holy church.

Since indeed now at last, we can hardly express it for grief and sorrow of mind, by the report of credible persons and public rumour it has come to our ears, nay even—O sorrow, we have seen and read it with our eyes, *that* many and various errors, some in truth already condemned by councils, and the decrees of our predecessors, and also expressly containing the heresy of the Greeks and Bohemians; others of them respectively either heretical or false, or scandalous, or offensive to pious ears, or seductive to simple minds, by false teachers of the faith, who through curious pride, desiring the glory of the world, seek to be wise above what is written, whose garrulity, as Jerome says, would have no credit unless they seemed to strengthen their perversenesss even by divine testimonies, though ill interpreted, from whose eyes the fear of God is departed,—have been lately raised up at the suggestion of the enemy of mankind, and scattered among some light-minded men in the renowned German nation.

And we grieve the more that this should have happened there, because we and our predecessors have always carried that nation in the bowels of charity. For, after the empire was translated by the Roman church from the Greeks to the same Germans, the same our predecesssors and ourselves have always received from them advocates and defenders of the same church. And these Germans, truly germane to the Catholic truth, it is well known, have always been the most eager assailants of heresies. Of which fact we have witnesses in *those praiseworthy constitutions* of the German emperors for the liberty of the church, and *for expelling and exterminating heretics from all Germany*, under most heavy penalties, even to loss of lands and dominion, against those who

receive or forbear to expel them; constitutions published long ago, and confirmed by our predecessors, and which, if they were now observed, would free us and them from this grievous affliction.

A witness of the same truth is *the condemnation and punishment, in the council of Constance*, of the perfidy of the Hussites, and Wickliffites, and *of Jerome of Prague*. The blood of Germans bear witness, poured out so often against the Bohemians. A witness, also, is the confutation, reprobation and damnation, not less learned, than true and holy, of the said errors or of many among them, by the universities of Cologne and Louvain, as most pious and most religious tillers of the Lord's vineyard. We might allege also many other proofs, which we think it good to pass by, that we may not seem to be writing a history.

According then to the care of the pastoral office committed unto us by Divine grace, we can by no means suffer or dissemble any longer the pestiferous poison of the forenamed errors, without disgrace to the Christian religion, and injury to the orthodox faith. Of these errors we have thought it meet to insert some in the present decree, and their tenor is as follows.

Forty-one Articles are then alleged, of which the following are some of the chief and most characteristic.

To deny that any sin remains in a child after baptism, is to tread underfoot Paul and Christ together.

It is a true doctrine, and better than all the doctrine of contrition hitherto given, that it is the highest penitence, to sin no more; the best penitence a new life.

Sins are remitted to no one, unless when the priest remits, he believes they are remitted; nay, sin would remain, unless he believed it remitted.

In the sacrament of penance, and remission of guilt, the pope, the bishop, does no more than the lowest priest; nay, where there is no priest, any Christian can do the same.

Their error is great, who go to the Eucharist, confiding on this, that they have confessed, that they are not conscious of any mortal sin, that they have used prayers and preparations; all those eat and drink judgment to themselves. But if they believe and trust that they shall there obtain grace, this faith alone makes them pure and worthy.

The Bohemians, communicating under both kinds, are not heretics, but only schismatics.

The treasures of the church, whence the pope gives indulgences, are not the merits of Christ and of the saints.

Indulgences are pious frauds upon the faithful, and remissions of good works.

The faithful are seduced who think that indulgences are wholesome, and useful for the fruit of the Spirit.

The Roman pontiff, the successor of St. Peter, is not the vicar of Christ over all the churches of the world, appointed in the person of St. Peter.

It is certain that it is not at all in the hand of the church or the pope, to make articles of faith, nor even laws of morals or of good works.

If the pope with a great part of the church thinks thus and thus, and does not err, still it is not sin or heresy to think the contrary, in a matter not necessary to salvation, till the one is approved and the other disapproved, by an universal council.

Some articles of John Huss condemned in the council of Constance, are most Christian, most true and evangelical, which the universal church could not condemn.

In every good work, the just man sins.

A good work, done in the best way, involves a venial sin.

IT IS AGAINST THE WILL OF THE SPIRIT THAT HERETICS SHOULD BE BURNED.

Purgatory cannot be proved from sacred canonical Scripture.

The prelates and secular princes would not do amiss, if they were to abolish all the bags of the mendicants.

The bull then proceeds in these words.

These errors respectively, how pestiferous they are, how pernicious, how scandalous, how seductive to pious and simple minds, how opposed, finally, to all charity, and reverence for the holy Roman church, the mother of all the faithful, and mistress of the faith, and against the strength of ecclesiastical discipline, namely, obedience, the fountain and source of all virtues, without which any one is proved to be an infidel, no one of sound mind can be ignorant.

We therefore, in the aforesaid matters, as most weighty, desiring to proceed earnestly, as is meet, and to stop the way against this pest and cancerous disease, that it may creep no further, like hurtful briars, in the Lord's field, having diligently weighed, discussed, strictly searched, and maturely deliberated on each and all of the said errors, and all having been duly pondered and often ventilated, with our venerable brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, the priors of the regular orders, and many other most learned professors or masters of sacred theology, and sacred and civil law, have found the same errors respectively, as said before, or articles, to be not Catholic, nor as such to be maintained, but against the doctrine or tradition of the Catholic church, and so

against the true and received interpretation of the divine Scripture, in the authority of which tradition Augustine judgeth we ought so to acquiesce, that he said he would not have believed the gospel unless the authority of the holy church had intervened. For from the same errors, or from some one, or several of them, it evidently follows, that the same church which is ruled by the Holy Spirit, errs, and has already erred. And this is against the promise of Christ—Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world. It is also against the determination of holy fathers, and the express decrees and canons of councils and supreme pontiffs which not to obey, Cyprian being witness, has ever been the fuel and cause of all heresies and schisms.

With the advice, then, and assent of the same our venerable brethren, and with mature deliberation of all and each the forenamed persons, by the authority of the Almighty God, and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and our own also, we condemn reprobate, and totally reject each of the forenamed articles or errors, as respectively heretical, or scandalous, or false, or offensive to pious ears, or seductive to the minds of the simple, and adverse to the Catholic truth, and we decree and declare that they must be accounted as condemned, reprobate and rejected, by all faithful Christians of both sexes. We prohibit, in virtue of holy obedience, and under penalty of the greater excommunication: also to ecclesiastical persons, of deprivation of their episcopal, patriarchal, metropolitan, and cathedral churches, their monasteries and priories, their conventual dignities! and ecclesiastical benefices, their secular and regular orders, and of disability to procure them or others for ever. Also of the privileges indulged by the Holy See, and its legates, whatever their tenor. Also of the power of reading and interpreting any sciences and faculties, and disability for ever to obtain these or others. Also of the office of preaching, and all other privileges of the same.

But as to the secular parties in that excommunication, under penalty of losing any fiefs obtained from the Roman church or any other source, and of disability to hold them or others for ever.

Also as to all the forenamed parties, under the express penalty of the prohibition of ecclesiastical burial, of disability for all and every lawful act, of infamy, incapacity for witness, and the crime of high treason, the penalties expressed in law against heretics and their favourers; to be incurred by the bare fact, without a further declaration, by each and all the forenamed parties, if they act contrary hereto. From which they may not be absolved, unless in the article of death, by virtue of any faculty or clauses contained in any grant to any person, under any form of words, except by the

Roman pontiff, or some other who receives a special commission for that purpose.

We prohibit also the faithful of Christ, all and each, of both sexes, laymen and clergy, secular and regular, of whatever order, and all other persons of whatever state, rank, and condition they be, and with whatsoever honours they may shine. Also the Cardinals of the holy Roman church, the patriarchs, primates, archbishops, and bishops of the patriarchal, metropolitan, and other cathedral churches, the prelates of the collegiate and other inferior churches, the clergy and other ecclesiastical persons, secular and regular, of whatever rank, even the mendicants, the abbots, priors, general ministers, or particular brethren, or religious, the Universities, exempt or not exempt, secular and regular of all orders.

Also KINGS, THE EMPEROR, electors, princes, dukes, marquises, counts, barons, captains, conductors, stewards, and all officials, the judges, notaries secular and ecclesiastical, corporations, universities, potentates, cities, fortresses, lands, and places, or their citizens, inhabitants, and denizens, and every other person, ecclesiastical or regular (as said before) everywhere through the whole world, and especially in Germany, now and in future time, that they presume not to assert, affirm, defend, and preach the forenamed errors, or any of them, and this perverse doctrine, nor in any way to favour it, publicly or secretly, silently or expressly, under any pretext or colour whatsoever.

Moreover, because the forenamed errors, and many more, are contained in the books or writings of a certain Martin Luther, we likewise condemn, reprobate, and totally reject the said books, and all the writings of the said Luther, whether they are in Latin or any other idiom, in which the said errors or any one of them are contained, and will that they be accounted altogether condemned, reprobate, and rejected. Commanding in virtue of holy obedience, and under the forenamed penalties, the faithful of Christ, all and each, of both sexes, that they presume not to read, assert, maintain, preach, praise, print, publish, or defend, writings, books, and schedules of this kind, or chapters contained in them, containing the forenamed articles or errors, by themselves, or another, or others, directly or indirectly, silently or in words, publicly or privately, in their own or others' houses. Nay, that immediately on the publication of this in any place whatsoever, they be diligently sought out by the ordinaries and others; and that they burn them publicly and solemnly under the forenamed penalties, in presence of the clergy and all the people.

But as to Luther himself, good God, what have we not done, what act of paternal charity have we omitted, to recall him from errors of this kind? For after we cited him, wishing to proceed

gently, we invited and exhorted him that he would renounce the said errors, or come to us, even under a safe conduct, and with needful money for the journey, without alarm or fear, which perfect love casteth out, and speak to us not secretly, but face to face. Had he done this, certainly, as we think, he would have come to his senses and acknowledged his errors; nor would he have found in the Roman court, which he reviles so much by frivolous rumours, so many faults; and we would have taught him, as *more clear than the noon day, that the holy Roman pontiffs, our predecessors*, whom against all modesty he injuriously reviles, IN THOSE CANONS OR CONSTITUTIONS which he seeks to revile, HAVE NEVER ERRED. *Because*, as the prophet says, *neither balm nor a physician is wanting in Gilead!*

After demanding a recantation from Luther and his adherents within sixty days, the decree is continued as follows.

Else, if the forenamed Luther, his accomplices, favourers, adherents, and receivers, act otherwise, and do not effectually perform these conditions all and each, within the appointed time, We, imitating the doctrine of the apostle who has taught us to reject a heretic after a first and second admonition, by the same authority declare of the said Luther, his forenamed complices, adherents, favourers, and receivers, and each one of them, as withered branches, not abiding in Christ, but teaching and preaching a contrary doctrine, hostile to the Catholic faith, or scandalous, or condemned, to the no small offence of the Divine majesty, and the harm and scandal of the catholic faith, and lightly esteeming the keys of the church—that they have been and are notorious and obstinate heretics; and as such we condemn them by these presents, and will and enjoin that they be accounted such by all the faithful of Christ of both sexes. And by the tenor of these presents, we subject them, all and each, to all the forenamed and other penalties justly inflicted on such men, and by the same penalties we now decree and declare them to be bound.

Moreover we prohibit the faithful of Christ before named, all and each, under pain of all and each the forementioned penalties, that they presume not, by themselves or others, directly or indirectly, silently or in words, publicly or in secret, in their own or others houses, or in other places, public or private, to read, maintain, preach, praise, publish, defend, or in any way possess, even *those writings of the forenamed Luther which do not contain the forementioned errors*, or any one of them, as coming from an enemy of the orthodox faith, and therefore vehemently suspected,

so that his memory may be entirely blotted out from the company of the faithful of Christ; *but let them burn them*, as said before.

Moreover, we warn all the faithful of Christ, under the same penalty of the greater excommunication, that after the expiry of the above term they avoid the said heretics as open and condemned, and disobedient to our commands, and, so far as able, cause them to be avoided, and have no commerce, conversation or communion with them, nor yield them necessary provisions.

Moreover, to the greater confusion of the said Luther, his complices, favourers, adherents and receivers, after the lapse of the above time, being declared and condemned heretics. We enjoin the faithful of Christ, all and each, of both sexes, the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops of the patriarchal, metropolitan, and other cathedral churches, the prelates of collegiate and inferior churches, the chapters, and other ecclesiastical persons, secular and regular, especially of the order to which the said Luther belongs, exempt and non-exempt. Also the princes, each and all, of whatever earthly or ecclesiastical dignity, kings, emperors, electors, dukes, marquises, counts, barons, captains, stewards, communities, corporations, universities, potentates, cities, forts and places, or their inhabitants and citizens, and all others through the whole world, that under all and each, the forenamed penalties, they themselves or any of them personally, apprehend the same Luther, his complices, adherents, receivers and favourers, and when apprehended, keep them and send them to us. And they will receive, for so good a work, remuneration and a worthy reward from ourselves and the Apostolic see. Or at least let them altogether expel them from the metropolitan cathedrals, collegiate and other churches, from their houses, convents, monasteries, cities, dominions, universities, camps, communities, lands and territories.

Also the cities, dominions, lands, camps, villas, counties, fortresses, towns and territories, wherever they be, each of them respectively, and the churches, monasteries, priories, houses, convents, and other religious or pious places of whatever rank, to which the said Luther, or any of the forenamed, shall happen to turn aside, so long as they abide there, and three days after their removal, we lay under ecclesiastical interdict.

And that these decrees may be known to all, we command moreover, all patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, the prelates of the patriarchal, metropolitan, cathedral, and collegiate churches, the chapters and other ecclesiastical persons, secular and regular, of the forementioned orders, brethren, religious, monks, exempt and non-exempt, in every place, and especially in Germany, that they or any of them under the like penalties, publicly denounce

and order, and command, to be announced by others, Luther, and all and each the before named, who, after the term is expired, shall not have obeyed our commands and monitions, in their churches, on Sundays and other festivals, when the greatest multitude are met for worship—as declared and condemned heretics; and command that they be strictly avoided by all men. Also we enjoin on all the faithful of Christ, that they avoid them in like manner, under pain of the same censures and penalties. And that they cause the present letters, or a transcript of them as directed below, to be read, published, and affixed, in their churches, monasteries, houses, convents, and other places.

We also *excommunicate* and *curse* all and each, of whatever state, degree, condition, pre-eminence, dignity, or excellence they may be, who by themselves or another or other, publicly or in secret, directly or indirectly, silently or in words, shall practise, or in any way procure that these letters be not read, published, and affixed, in their lands and dominions.

Finally, because it would be difficult for the present letters to be carried to every place where it might be needful; We will, and by apostolical authority decree, that their transcripts made and subscribed by the hand of a public notary, or copies printed in the holy city, and confirmed by the seal of any ecclesiastical prelate, shall have the same force as the original letters would have, if they were exhibited and shewn.

And lest the said Luther, and all the others forenamed whom the present letters concern, should be able to pretend ignorance of these letters and of all and each the things contained in them; We have willed that the same letters be affixed and published on the doors of the Basilica of the prince of apostles, and also of the cathedral churches of Brandenburg, Misnia, and Mersburg, decreeing that the publication of these letters so made shall bind the said Luther, and all the others forenamed whom they concern, just as if the letters on that day had been personally read and intimated to them, since it is not likely that things which are done so openly can remain unknown to them. And these things we decree, *notwithstanding the apostolic constitutions and ordinances, given to the above*, all and each, or to any one or them, or to any others, *by the apostolic see*, or those who have power from it, *under whatever form, even though confessional; and with whatever clauses, even the strongest*, or for whatever reasons or weighty consideration, *it be indulged or conceded*, that they cannot be interdicted, suspended, or excommunicated by apostolic letters, which do not make full and express mention by direct words, and not in general clauses to that effect, of the party having that indulgence, so that

the tenor, causes, and forms of that indulgence be here altogether set aside, as if inserted word for word.

Let no one of mankind infringe, or with rash daring contravene, this page of our condemnation, reprobation, rejection, decree, declaration, prohibition, will, mandate, exhortation, adjuration, requisition, advice, assignation, confession, condemnation, subjection, excommunication, and curse. If any one presume to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of the Almighty God, and of the blessed Peter and Paul his apostles.

But this condemnation of the doctrines of the faith, and arrogance against the preachers of the everlasting gospel, was attended by claims and curses of the like arrogance, and breathing the same cruelty, against those temporal powers which disputed the pre-eminence of the little horn. The following extract from the 'Damnation and Excommunication of Henry VIII. by Pope Paul III.' may continue the series of historical illustrations:

By the same authority, knowledge, and fulness of power, we will and decree, that Henry the king, his complices, favourers, adherents, counsellors, and followers, after they have incurred the above penalties, and their forenamed descendants, be thenceforth infamous, and not admitted to bear witness, that they may not, while living, make wills, codicils, or other bequests, and be disabled from receiving any succession by will or inheritance; and none be required to defend himself from them, but only they from others, in any cause, civil, or criminal.

We warn further, all and each, the faithful of Christ, that they avoid the above-named who are excommunicate, interdicted, deprived, cursed, and condemned; nor hold with them, or the cities, dominions, lands, fortresses, villages, towns, and territories, of the said king, and their citizens, dwellers and inhabitants, or the subjects and vassals, *any commerce of buying, selling, bartering, or any kind of trade*, or any converse and communion; or presume, in public or private, to carry, or lead, or cause to be carried or led, or receive when brought by them, wine, salt, grain, or other victuals, arms, cloths, wares, or any other merchandize, goods by sea in their galleys, ships, and other vessels, or by land with mules or other animals; or give help, advice, or favour to them that do such things, under any pretence, by themselves, or others: which if they do, beside the forenamed excommunication, let them incur, by the bare fact, the penalty of their contracts being void, and the

loss of all their goods, victuals, &c., which shall belong to the captors.

Moreover, if notwithstanding the above, Henry the King, his complices, &c., persevere in their obstinacy, and no sting of conscience bring them to their senses, trusting perchance to their power and their arms; We require and admonish, all and each, the Dukes, Marquises, Counts, and all others, both secular and ecclesiastic, as well as judges, who *de facto* are subject to the said Henry, under the same penalties of excommunication and loss of their goods (which shall belong, as aforesaid, to the captors), that laying aside every excuse and delay, they expel, even by force of arms, if needful, those excommunicate and each of them, their soldiers and mercenaries, both horse and foot, and all others who assist them in arms, from the forenamed kingdom and dominions, and procure that Henry the King, his complices, &c., not obeying our commands, mix not in the cities, lands, castles, villas, towns, forts, and other places of the kingdom; prohibiting them under all the said penalties from taking any arms offensive, or defensive, or artillery, in the cause of the said Henry and his abettors.

Moreover, to reduce the said King Henry more easily to a sound mind, and obedience to the holy see, We exhort, and require in the Lord, all and each, the Christian princes, of whatever imperial or regal eminence, *by the bowels of mercy of our God*, whose cause is at stake; and those who are inferior to the Emperor or King (whom for the eminence of their dignity we except from the censure) we no less command under pain of excommunication; that they render no advice, favour, or help of any kind to Henry the King, and his complices, &c., or any one of them, directly or indirectly, publicly, or in secret, silently or in words, *even under pretext of any obligations, though often repeated, and ratified by oath or any other of the firmest bonds;* and in the present letters *we absolve them and each of them from all these oaths, by the same authority, knowledge, and fulness of power;* and the agreements and obligations themselves so made, or which may hereafter be made, we decree and declare to be of no force or strength, but that they be accounted null, void, worthless, empty, and as things that had never a being. If they fail to do this, after the present letters are published, we place them, each and all, the states, lands, towns, castles, villas, and other places, under ecclesiastical interdict, to endure until their princes cease from all advice, help, and favour to Henry the king, and his abettors.

Moreover, we in like manner exhort and require the forenamed princes, and any other who fight under pay of the faithful of Christ, and any other persons having armed followers, both by sea and land, and also command them in virtue of sacred obedience,

that they rise with arms against the said King Henry, his complices and followers, while they persevere in their errors and their rebellion against the forenamed see, and persecute them, one and each, and force and compel them into the unity of the Church, and obedience to the said see; and those persons, and their subjects, and vassals, and the inhabitants of their cities, lands, castles, towns, villas, and territories, and all others who disobey our mandates, and who shall in any way acknowledge the said King Henry after he has incurred these penalties, as their lord even *de facto*, or presume in any sort to obey him, or shall refuse to expel him and his accomplices from the said kingdom and dominions, let them capture wherever they find them, and their goods moveable and immoveable, their wares, monies, ships, debts, possessions, cattle, even anywhere beyond the territories of the said King Henry.

For we, by the same authority, knowledge, and fulness of power, grant them plenary license, faculty, and authority of converting the goods, wares, monies, ships, possessions, and cattle so taken, to their own private use; *decreeing* that they all fully belong and appertain to the same captors, and *that persons who derive their origin from the forenamed kingdom* and dominions, or who have homes therein, or dwell there in any way, AND DO NOT OBEY OUR COMMANDS, *wherever they chance to be taken*, BECOME THE SLAVES OF THE CAPTORS; and we extend these present letters, in this respect, to all others of whatever dignity, rank, station, order, or condition, who dare to minister victuals, arms, or monies, to the said Henry the King, his complices and adherents, or to any others who disobey these our commands, or who dare to hold commerce with them, or by themselves or others, in public or in private, directly or indirectly, to render them in any way, help, counsel, or favour.

And we will that all and each, of whatever state, rank, condition, pre-eminence, dignity, or excellence, who by themselves or others, publicly or in secret, directly or indirectly, shall hinder these present letters or their copies from being read, affixed, or published in their states, lands, castles, towns, villas, and territories, shall *ipso facto* incur the same censures and punishments as above.

Let no one then of mankind infringe, or with rash daring contravene, this page of our monition, aggravation, re-aggravation, declaration, percussion, absolution, liberation, requisition, inhibition, exhortation, exception, prohibition, concession, extension, mandate, will and decree. But if any dare to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of the blessed Peter and Paul, His apostles.

Given at Rome, at St. Mark, in the year of the Incarnation, 1535, August 30th, in the first year of our pontificate.

The bull of Pius the Fifth against Queen Elizabeth, may complete this short series of illustrations, and as it is more concise than the two former, it is here given entire.

THE DAMNATION AND EXCOMMUNICATION OF ELIZABETH QUEEN OF ENGLAND AND HER ADHERENTS, WITH AN ADDITION OF OTHER PUNISHMENTS.

Pius the bishop, servant of the servants of God, for a perpetual memorial of the matter.

He that reigneth on high, to whom is given all power in heaven and in earth, committed one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, (out of which there is no salvation,) to one alone upon earth, namely to Peter the prince of the apostles, and to the successor of Peter the bishop of Rome, to be governed in fulness of power. Him alone he made prince over all people and all kingdoms, to pluck up, destroy, scatter, consume, plant, and build; that he may contain the faithful that are knit together with the bond of charity, in the unity of the Spirit, and present them spotless and unblameable to the Saviour.

In discharge of which function, we who are called by the goodness of God to the judgment of the aforesaid Church, do spare no pains, labouring with all earnestness that unity and the Catholic religion, which the Author thereof hath for the trial of his children's faith, and for our amendment, suffered to be punished with so great afflictions, might be preserved incorrupt. But the number of the ungodly hath gotten such power, that there is now no place left in the whole world, which they have not essayed to corrupt with their most wicked doctrines: among the rest, Elizabeth, the pretended Queen of England, that slave of wickedness, lending thereto her helping hand, with whom, as in a sanctuary, the most pernicious of all men have found a refuge. This same woman having seized on the kingdom, and monstrously usurping the place of supreme head of the church in all England, and the chief authority and jurisdiction thereof, hath again brought back the said kingdom into miserable destruction, which was then newly recovered to the Catholic faith and good fruits.

For having by strong hand inhibited the exercise of the true religion, which Mary, lawful queen of famous memory, had by the help of this see restored, after it had been formerly overthrown by Henry the Eighth, a revolter therefrom, and following and embracing the errors of heretics, she hath removed the royal council consisting of the English nobility, and filled it with obscure men, being heretics, hath oppressed the embracers of the Catholic faith, placed once more impious preachers, monsters of iniquity, abolished

the sacrifice of the mass, prayers, fasting, distinction of meats, unmarried life, and the Catholic rites and ceremonies: commanded books to be read in the whole realm containing manifest heresy, and impious mysteries and institutions, by herself entertained and observed, according to the prescription of Calvin, to be likewise observed by her subjects; presumed to throw bishops, rectors of churches, and other Catholic priests, out of their churches and benefices, and to bestow them and other church livings upon heretics, and daring to decide upon church causes, hath prohibited the prelates, clergy and people, to acknowledge the church of Rome, or obey the precepts and canonical sanctions thereof; compelled most of them to condescend to her wicked laws, and to abjure the authority and obedience of the bishop of Rome, and to acknowledge her to be sole mistress in temporal and spiritual matters, and this by oath; imposed penalties and punishments upon those which obeyed not, and exacted them of those which persevered in the unity of the faith and their obedience; cast the Catholic prelates and rectors of churches into prison, where many of them, spent with long languishing and sorrow, have miserably ended their lives. All which things, seeing they are manifest and notorious to all nations, and by the gravest testimony of very many so substantially proved, there is no place at all left for excuse, defence, or evasion.

We seeing that impieties and wicked actions are multiplied one upon another; and moreover, that the persecution of the faithful and affliction for religion, groweth every day heavier and heavier, through the instigation and means of the said Elizabeth; because we understand her mind to be so hardened and indurate, that she hath not only contemned the godly requests and admonitions of Catholic princes, concerning her healing and conversion, but also hath not so much as permitted the nuncios of this see to cross over into England; are constrained of necessity to betake ourselves to the weapons of justice against her, not being able to mitigate our sorrow, that we are drawn to take punishment upon one, whose ancestors have deserved so well from the whole state of Christendom. Being therefore supported by His authority, whose pleasure it was to place us, though unworthy for so great a burthen, in this supreme throne of Justice, out of the fulness of our apostolic power, we do declare the aforesaid Elizabeth, being an heretic, and a favourer of heretics, and her adherents in the matters aforesaid, to have incurred the sentence of Anathema, and to be cut off from the unity of the body of Christ.

And moreover, we do declare her to be deprived of her pretended title to the kingdom aforesaid, and of all dominion, dignity, and privilege whatsoever.

And also that the nobility, subjects, and people of the said kingdom, and all others which have in any sort sworn unto her, *are for ever absolved from any such oath, and all manner of duty of dominion, allegiance, and obedience.* As we also do by virtue of these presents absolve them, and do deprive the said Elizabeth of her pretended title to the kingdom and all other things aforesaid. And we do command and interdict all and every the noblemen, subjects, people, and others aforesaid, that they presume not to obey her, or her monitions, mandates, and laws. Those who do the contrary, we bind with the like sentence of Anathema.

And because it were of too much difficulty to convey these presents to all places wherever it may be needful, our will is, that the copies thereof, under a public notary's hand, and sealed with the seal of an ecclesiastical prelate, or of his court, shall have the same credit with all people, judicial, or extrajudicial, as these presents would have, if they were exhibited or shown. Given at Rome in St. Peter's in the year of the Incarnation 1570, the fifth of the Kalends of May, and of our Pontificate the fifth year.

Such were the laws of the papacy for the persecution and extermination of heretics, increasing in malignity from its first rise down to modern times. It would require a volume to detail the history of their execution. A few extracts alone will be enough to illustrate the practical force of these bloody and fierce ordinances of the Roman church.

And first, Bellarmine sums up his argument on the duty of putting heretics to death, in the following terms:

'We will shew that incorrigible, and especially relapsed heretics, may and ought to be rejected by the church, and be visited by the secular powers, with temporal punishments, and even with death itself.' . . . .

'This is proved, thirdly, by the laws of the church, Cap. ad abolendum, et cap. Excommunicatus, extrav. de Hereticis; and in the sixth chapter de Hereticis, the church defines, that incorrigible heretics must be delivered to the secular power, to be dealt with in the fitting manner. Also the council of Constance, Sess. 15, condemned the opinion of John Huss; and delivered Huss himself, and Jerome of Prague to the secular power, by which both of them were burned. Finally, Leo X. has condemned the articles of Luther.

In the last sentence allusion seems made to that condemned article of Luther—'To burn heretics is against the mind of the Spirit of God.' The argument drawn from the practice of the council of Constance is a still more notable specimen of papal reasoning.

The same advocate, as he proceeds in his vindication, illustrates the actual course of persecution in the Romish church.

'Experience teaches that there is no other remedy. For the church has proceeded by slow steps, and tried all remedies. First, she only excommunicated. Then she added a fine of money, and afterwards exile. Lastly, she was compelled to come to the punishment of death. For heretics despise excommunication, and say that those lightnings are cold. If you threaten a fine of money, they neither fear God nor regard men; knowing that fools will not be wanting to believe in them, and by whom they may be sustained. If you shut them in prison, or send them into exile, they corrupt those near to them with their words, and those at a distance with their books. *Therefore the only remedy is, to send them betimes into their own place.*'

Under these bloody maxims those persecutions were carried on, from the eleventh and twelfth centuries almost to the present day, which stand out on the page of history. After the signal of open martyrdom had been given in the canons of Orleans, there followed the extirpation of the Albigenses, under the form of a crusade, the establishment of the inquisition, the cruel attempts to extinguish the Waldenses, the martyrdoms of the Lollards, the cruel wars to exterminate the Bohemians, the burning of Huss and Jerome, and multitudes of other confessors, before the Reformation; and afterwards, the ferocious cruelties practised in the Netherlands, the martyrdoms of queen Mary's reign, the extinction, by fire and sword, of the reformation in Spain and Italy, by fraud and open persecution in Poland, the massacre of Bartholomew, the persecutions of the Huguenots by the League, the extirpation of the Vaudois, and all the cruelties and perjuries connected with

the revocation of the edict of Nantz. These are the more open and conspicuous facts which explain the prophecy, besides the slow and secret murders of the holy tribunal of the inquisition.

Let us now examine the two reasons which may be alleged to secure the Church of Rome from the force of this prediction. First, it is urged that the parties condemned were not saints of the Most High, but wicked heretics, whom it was right and needful to punish, even with death. Thus in the Rhemish New Testament on Rev, xvii. we read as follows:

> 'Drunken with the blood of saints.' The Protestants foolishly expound this of Rome, for that there they put heretics to death, and *allow*? of their punishment in other countries. But their blood is not called the blood of saints, no more than the blood of thieves man-killers, and other malefactors; for the shedding of which, by order of justice, no commonwealth shall give account.

To meet this excuse, it is not needful, either to determine the abstract question where precisely the line is to be drawn between righteous government and unlawful persecution, or to prove that all who have suffered from the papal tyranny have been truly saints of God. The question, it is true, would be simplified, if we were to lay down the maxim, as many have done in modern days, that governments ought to take no cognizance of truth and error, of right and wrong in religion, but to confine themselves simply to external relations of property and life, and leave all to do what is right in their own eyes. But this, however simple and popular, would be only to cast out Beelzebub by Beelzebub, and to contradict openly the tenor of the word of God. To maintain again that all religious error is innocent, is a ground of argument sometimes assumed, but which is most false and unscriptural. On the other hand, nothing is more dangerous, and more certain to bring on the worst evils of persecution, than to suppose a mere impression of holding the truth to be a sufficient warrant for violence and force towards those who differ. The following maxims, however, may be safely asserted, and appear to form

the true barrier against these contrasted falsehoods. To render the use of external punishment lawful in the repression of supposed heresy or blasphemy, it must be subjected to the following laws. First, that what is enforced be divine truth, and what is discountenanced or punished be really dangerous error. To punish others, in any measure or degree, for holding the truth, however conscientious we may be in fancying that truth to be error, must brand us as direct persecutors in the sight of God. Next, that there be personal knowledge and assurance of the truth, and personal discernment of the evil, in those who profess to maintain the one and to punish or repress the other. To punish even dangerous errors or blasphemies, from motives of interest, education, or prejudice, without direct and clear conviction, on true grounds, of their evil character, is in God's sight persecution, not less than the direct oppression of the truth itself. Thirdly, there must be not merely unavoidable error, but clear tokens of wilful rejection of truth, before any infliction of punishment can be lawful. Fourthly, there must be a previous forbearance, resembling the patience and long-suffering of God himself. Otherwise justice will wear the appearance of malice, and righteous equity be transformed into an eager thirst for blood. And indeed, if personal conviction be made indispensable in the judge, this restriction will be sure to be observed. They who have patiently, for themselves, struggled upward through the mists of false opinion into the clear light of certain truth, will be most forbearing to those who may still be wrapped in the shade. Fifthly, there must be such a diffusion of religious knowledge and moral light among the people, as that the punishment, whether light or heavy, may find a general response in their conscience, and not work merely as a blind appeal to their fears. Sixthly, there must be a strict proportion between the nature of the offence and the penalty imposed, both as regards the evil in the error itself, and the overt acts of its promulgation. Thoughts are free in their own nature. But

there are many degrees, from the forced defence of opinions, to their active promulgation, and from this again to the use of ribaldry, mockery, and insult ; and again, from abstract heresies which are indirectly ruinous, to open blasphemies and gross idolatries which strike at the foundations of natural and revealed religion. Lastly, to make the infliction lawful, it must proceed from real, and not feigned love to the souls of men.

Now it may seem to many, doubtless, far more simple, instead of these various restrictions and rules, to condemn the papal persecutions at once, on the broad maxim that rulers have nothing to do with religious opinions, and that to punish these, in any case, is a direct wrong. But the simplest course is not always the truest or safest. There is this broad difference in the two lines of argument ; the maxim just named is the maxim of an atheist, and consistent in no one beside. The laws above maintained are those of Christian holiness, truth, and grace, in their just and divine union. They do also, in practice, impose an effectual restraint on the evils of persecution, while they recognize the destructive nature of religious falsehood, and the responsibility of rulers to the God of truth and holiness.

Let us compare these maxims with the history of the papal church ; and by every one of these seven marks the guilt of persecution will be clearly proved against it. All were pronounced heretics in its decrees, who did not submit to its own pretensions,—pretensions blasphemous in their nature, and founded mainly on gross and impudent falsehoods. It was truth that was crushed and hunted down by the advocates of direct image worship and open idolatry. The persecutors were, many of them, as Leo X., secret infidels. None of them could pretend to have sought the truth impartially for themselves. For this was forbidden the laymen by an imperious decree, and the clergy had both the ties of interest, and the obligation of an oath, binding them to receive without question the decrees of the Pope. None of them, in the sight of men, and few in the sight of

God, could purge themselves from being guilty of the sordid motives of Demetrius—"By this craft we have our wealth." Instead of heretical wilfulness, that forced itself on the public notice; the inquisition, by its very nature, wormed itself into the most secret retirements, and applied the most hateful tortures to wring out the hidden secrets of the heart. In short, there is not one mark which the word of God and enlightened reason can supply to discern between righteousness and cruel persecution, which does not brand the title of persecutor on the forehead of the papal church.

Again, the prophecy by no means requires us to suppose that the little horn should persecute saints only. Certainly the servants of the devil have never had the prerogative given them, which is denied to the children of God,—to discern infallibly between hypocrites and real Christians. If two-thirds of those who suffered by Romish persecution could be proved to be real heretics, this could not impeach the lawful application of the words to the Romish church. The fact is clear and certain, that the papal definition of heresy, like a spacious drag-net, would include every faithful Christian, without one exception. Some might escape the stroke, from the fact of their being, more or less, guilty of the sin of Rome, and entangled in her delusions. But the more vigorous and pure their faith, the more sure would be their detection, and the more infallible their punishment.

But it may be further objected that the active persecutions of the papacy began at too late a period to answer the terms of the prophecy. If that power arose in the sixth or early in the seventh century, and no actual infliction of death upon heretics took place till the middle of the eleventh century, how can we reconcile this with the description of the text.

The objection rests, in every part, on a foundation of sand. For, in the first place, the maxims of persecution were clearly laid down as early as Pope Pelagius, in the sixth century, as the previous extracts will shew.

Next, the records of history soon close over the sufferings of the faithful, unless some great deliverance follows, or political changes are connected with their end. No pagan author tells us of the fiery furnace, or of the den of lions; and the cruelties of Antiochus on the faithful Jews have left scarcely a trace behind them in heathen writings. Further, the prophetic "wearing out" of the saints, may apply to seduction as well as to persecution, to lighter punishments as well as to open martyrdom. And finally, even the wearing out of the saints is not directly asserted to extend through the whole period of the little horn's dominion. The saints, or the times and laws, shall for a prescribed period be given into his hand. But the fierceness of the persecution, might, in the providence of God, be withheld for a time; as the sufferings of Israel during Joseph's own life, though this also lay within the bounds of the four hundred years, the period assigned by prophecy for their affliction. The objection therefore, in every part, is fallacious and unsound.

Let us now, finally, review the historical evidence, and compare it with those features of the little horn which the prophecy unfolds:

And first, the little horn was to arise on the body of the fourth beast, in contrast with the first, second, or third. The papacy has had its permanent seat among the western kingdoms of Europe, and within that territory which belongs exclusively to the fourth or Roman empire.

The little horn appears in the vision, when the separation of the fourth empire has begun, and next in order after the mention of those ten kingdoms or horns which were to obtain the chief power in the broken monarchy. The rise of the papacy, in like manner, followed close upon the fall of the western empire and the rise of the barbarian kingdoms.

The dominion of the little horn, in the prophecy, is the one main event which marks the history of the fourth empire, after its division. By the confession of

all the best historians, the rise, the supremacy, and the decline of the papacy, is the one centre around which we have to arrange, for twelve centuries, the history of the European kingdoms.

To prepare the way of the little horn, three of the horns before it are uprooted. After the fall of the empire, exactly three dynasties, and no more, were uprooted to make way for the temporal sovereignty of the bishop of Rome.

The eleventh horn, though vast in its claims and pretensions, was to be small in size. The popedom has in like manner, in its outward form, been always one of the least among the European kingdoms; while its sovereigns have claimed and exercised a supreme dominion over the whole.

The little horn is diverse from all the rest; for it has eyes like those of a man, and an articulate voice. The papacy by its own laws, claims 'a princedom more perfect than every human princedom,' and surpassing them as far as the light of the sun exceeds the light of the moon. It claims the office of a *seer*, who has full insight into divine mysteries; and of a *prophet*, an infallible interpreter of the Divine will. All its decisions 'are to be so received, as if they were confirmed by the voice of the Divine Peter himself.' Its decrees are given, 'auctoritate, scientiâ ac plenitudine,' with the fulness of Divine knowledge, and the fulness also of Apostolic power.

The mouth of the little horn was to speak great words against the Most High. The pope declares, in his own solemn and authorized decrees, that IT IS CERTAIN THAT HE IS STYLED GOD, AND IT IS MANIFEST THAT GOD CANNOT BE JUDGED BY MAN. He further pronounces concerning himself, that he is RECEIVED INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRIST'S UNDIVIDED UNITY.

The little horn is further to wear out the saints of the Most High. The words will apply either to delusion or oppression. Now Pelagius, and his successors ever since, have laid down these three maxims; that it

is schism to deny the supremacy or disobey the mandates of the Roman see ; that schism ought to be punished by the secular power ; and that these powers ought to be urged and compelled to exterminate and root out all such schismatics from their dominions. From that time onward the only alternative allowed by the papacy to the saints has been sin or suffering ; the submission to an impious claim, wearing out the conscience and wasting the spiritual life ; or the open penalties of confiscation, imprisonment, torture, and death. See the words of Pelagius, addressed to Narses in the middle of the sixth century.

'Whoever is separated from the apostolic see is doubtless in schism. Men of this kind must be repressed by external power. If any one erect another altar, let him be excommunicated, and if he despise this, let him be crushed by the public powers. See, my lord, *because your mind perhaps is timid, lest you should seem to persecute,* I have taken pains to set before you these authorities, that they who make schisms ought to be restrained, not only with exile of their goods, but severe imprisonment.'

How these principles and maxims were carried out in the middle ages may be seen from the narrative of Sismondi. 'Many sects,' he tells us, 'existed together in Provence ; and this was the necessary consequence of the freedom of inquiry, which was the essence of their doctrine. With one accord they considered that the Romish Church had changed the nature of Christianity, and that she was the object described in the Apocalypse as the woman of Babylon. The Patarin creed did not fail to spread itself into other Christian lands, as Italy, Lorraine, Germany, and Spain. The pope, Innocent III., instead of trying to convert them, ordered his ministers to burn their chiefs, scatter their flocks, and confiscate the property of those who refused to bend their will to his. Several chiefs of the new communion were burnt at Nevers in 1198, and the following years. The intolerance of the pope was roused by symptoms of

the change of opinions which he began to see drawing near to himself. Persecution, in scattering the sectarians, had spread the germs of the reformation in every country where the Roman tongue was spoken. In vain the Inquisition believed itself able to force human reason to bow down, and to impose one sole rule of faith. To maintain unity of belief, the Church had recourse to the expedient of burning all those who separated themselves from her ; but *although for two hundred years the fires were never quenched, still every day saw Catholics abjuring the faith of their fathers, and embracing the religion which often guided them to the stake.* In vain Gregory IX. in 1231, *put to death every heretic whom he found concealed in Rome :* his own letters addressed in 1235 to the bishops of that part of Italy, shew that, in spite of the severity of the inquisition, the Patarins ceased not to increase in numbers.'

The remarks of an intelligent Italian writer, himself at the time in the communion of the Roman Church, on these facts of her history, are deeply instructive, and illustrate the terms of the prophecy. Professor Rosetti observes as follows :—'It makes the heart of a true Christian bleed, to think of the fatal error of the Latin Church ; which, by persecuting others, laid the foundation of her own irreparable ruin. That these opinions were most injurious to her cannot be denied : but the means taken to destroy them were, of all others, the most likely to strengthen them, and render them more deeply rooted. St. John prophesied that Satan's delegate would use horrid cruelties, and inundate Babylon with the blood of Christ's martyrs ; and the pope, to prove that he was not that delegate, did use horrid cruelties, and caused Rome to overflow with the purest of Christian blood ! According to some historians, no less than two millions of human beings were sacrificed to the resentment of Rome, down to the year 1650. And this was the means taken to contradict the evidence of those who believed the evangelist really saw in spirit

the sanguinary power of the popes, when he wrote, "I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints. I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and they cried with a loud voice, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge, and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

And very justly and beautifully does the same author remark on this conduct of the papal Church. 'The ruler who, forgetful of his true interest, instead of stretching out his hand to sorrowful children, prefers to trample upon murmuring slaves, may obtain a temporary triumph; but he will entail on his successors a long train of misfortunes, from which they will seek to extricate themselves in vain.' In other words, a law of inflexible righteousness binds together the two statements of the prophecy. The little horn may triumph for a season, and "wear out the saints of the Most High." But for this very cause, and by the stern severity of a moral retribution, "the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end."

The same spirit which reigned and triumphed in the middle ages, continued unchanged after the Reformation. And thus that refined patron of art, the pleasure-loving Pope Leo, speaks, in his bull against Luther, of 'the praiseworthy constitutions of the German emperors, for expelling and exterminating heretics from all Germany, under heavy penalties of loss of lands and dominions against those who forbear to exterminate them; which if they were now observed,' he adds dolefully, 'would free us from this grievous affliction.' It is needless to adduce the medal struck at Rome in honour of the Bartholomew massacre, and other tokens of Romish cruelty in later years.

The little horn, further, shall think to change times. The description applies, in all its force, to the systematic perversion of God's words by which all the promises of millennial glory are wrested from their true sense, and

referred to the dominion and grandeur of the church of Rome. The orator of the Pope, for instance, in the Lateran council, declares that in the submission of all nations to Leo the prophecy was fulfilled.—'All kings shall fall down and worship Him; all nations shall serve and obey Him.' The same antichristian feature appears in those advocates of the papacy, who would clear it from the guilt of actual idolatry, because 'it is part of that church from which the idols are utterly abolished.' Thus are the times changed; but only in the vain "thoughts" of dreamers who see false visions, and divine lying divinations; because the visible glory of Christ's kingdom remains still to be revealed.

Finally, the little horn thinks to change laws. The Pope again has annulled the only surviving law of Paradise, confirmed by the words of Christ. The Lord ordained, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The Pope ordains, 'We decide also that, according to the sacred canons, the marriages contracted by priests and deacons, BE DISSOLVED, and the parties brought to do penance.' The papacy has further annulled the second commandment, given on the mount by the lips of God; in theory, by the childish and false distinction between heathen idols and Christian images; and in practice, by hiding it from the people, and blotting it out from the catechisms of general instruction. The Pope has further annulled the main laws of the gospel. He forbids the cup to the laity, although the Lord himself has commanded, "Drink ye all of it." He forbids the people of Christ, in general, to use the word of God in their own tongue; though Christ himself has charged them, "Search the scriptures." He forbids the laity to reason or converse on the doctrines of the gospel; though St. Peter has commanded them, "Be ye ready to give a reason of the hope that is in you." The Pope, finally, sanctions the invocation of saints and angels; though St. Paul has warned us, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels;" though St. John has re-

newed the charge to the disciples of Christ, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols;" and an ange from heaven renews the caution, in his words to the same holy apostle, "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant: worship God."

Thus every feature of the prophecy finds its full counterpart in the constitution, decrees, and history of the Roman popedom. And hence we may gather, with a firm and assured conviction, that this is the true meaning of the vision, designed from the very first by the all-seeing Spirit of God.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE MORAL ASPECT OF THE VISION OF THE LITTLE HORN.

DAN. VII. 19, 20.—"THEN WOULD I KNOW THE TRUTH . . . . OF THE TEN HORNS, AND OF THE OTHER WHICH CAME UP, AND BEFORE WHOM THREE FELL."

THESE words convey to us a secret and weighty lesson of Divine wisdom. They imply that the history of the Fourth Empire, and the true application of the Little Horn, would be of the deepest interest and importance to the Church of God. The mind of the holy prophet was therefore drawn forth by the Spirit into a peculiar earnestness of desire. And surely if Daniel, so many ages since, longed to "know the truth," and understand the real nature of this mysterious Power, much more should Christians, in these latter days, pray earnestly for light and wisdom, that they may understand clearly, and without all doubt, the true meaning of this holy prophecy of God's word.

Some critical and historical proofs have now been given, which confirm the application of the Little Horn to the Papacy of Rome. Four main reasons conspire to establish this view;—the continuous connexion of the prophetic history, the proportion of its various parts, the constancy of the official sense of kings in the symbolic visions, and finally, the minute correspondence of each separate feature in the description. But there are moral and spiritual aspects in which the prophecy may be viewed, and which all point, with one consent, to the same interpretation of its meaning.

I. The whole of Daniel's prophecies may historically be arranged in two parts, those which precede, and those which follow after, the Fall of Jerusalem. The former includes the history of Babylon, Persia, and Greece, with the rising power of Rome, in the two first visions; the history of Cyrus and his conquests, of Alexander and his victories; and the successive reigns in Syria and Egypt, from Seleucus to Antiochus Epiphanes, and the Roman supremacy in the East; the first coming of Messiah, his rejection by his own people, and the desolation of Jerusalem and the temple by the Roman armies. The latter includes mainly the description of the Fourth Empire, its ten divisions, and the history of the Little Horn: with similar predictions in the two later chapters.

Now, in the first of these two parts, the visions are both *continuous* and comprehensive. They include all the main events of Providence which could affect the Church of God. To suppose this character suddenly reversed in the second part, is an assumption without any reason, and opposed to all analogy. The Spirit of God, in the earlier part of each vision, has already given a key to the style and manner of His own revelations. And this key assures us, that the history of the ten kings, and of their fellow, the Little Horn, ranges through the whole course of the Gospel dispensation.

II. The great purpose for which the Holy Spirit announces evils before they arrive, is to warn the Church, and preserve her from danger. In these two visions, one great event is thus set before her, the rise of the Little Horn, with its confederate powers. Now if the Church, for eighteen centuries, has been free from any danger which needed a Divine warning, and three or four years alone include and limit the range of Satanic temptations, there might be some excuse for contracting the prophecy within this narrow bound. But St. Paul tells us that the mystery of iniquity did already work in his day. Let us grant, therefore, that the dispensa-

tion will close with an open and short-lived form of infidel rebellion. Still the moral reasons which might lead us to expect a warning of that last form of evil, apply with tenfold force to those ages of delusion which have prepared its way. Evils, which last for generation after generation, masked under the most subtle disguise, seem far more to require a Divine exposure and admonition, than other forms of wickedness which display their own ungodliness, and hurry themselves into a speedy ruin. The arguments which result from the continuity and order of the vision, are not more conclusive than those derived from its moral purpose, in confirming the earlier and larger application to the corrupt Church of Rome.

III. The phrases of the prophecy, when minutely examined, confirm the longer duration of the Little Horn. "He shall wear out the saints of the Most High." The term most naturally denotes long-continued and persevering acts of oppression. "He shall think to change times and laws." Now, although a reign of three or four years might possibly be enough for the exploits of a mighty conqueror, the character of a lawgiver seems, in its very nature, to require a longer season for its display. So it has been in every case which the world has hitherto witnessed. And of all kinds of power, a control over the times is the most incongruous, if meant to describe a sovereign who is to rise and fall within the tenth part of one single generation of mankind.

The manner in which the duration of this power is described, confirms the same view. The general arguments for the year-day interpretation have been given elsewhere, and need not to be repeated here. But, beside the general proof which they supply, there is another which arises from the peculiar form of the phrase. "They shall be given into his hand," it is said, "for a time, and times, and the dividing of a time." The period is distinguished into three parts, as if to denote a gradual rise, a stable continuance, and a more rapid fall. Now if the whole

period be only three years and six months, this feature perishes entirely. But on the other view the full significance of the phrase is retained, and it is found to accord fully with the main outlines of Papal history.

The description of the judgment, which follows, leads to the same conclusion. "They shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end." The words of the prophecy distinguish two stages of the fall, the removal of dominion, and then utter extinction and ruin. There is an air of deliberation and a character of gradual progress, which agrees ill with the instantaneous ruin of a short-lived power, but answers well to the overthrow of a dominion which has endured for ages. The same feature appears again in the Apocalypse, in the two successive stages of the fall of Babylon, with three chapters of the prophecy interposed. (Rev. xiv. 8 ; xviii. 2.)

All these various indications, though separately minute, become powerful by their concurrence, and establish the truth of the interpretation already given.

IV. A further light is thrown on this prophecy, when we compare it with the general warnings of the New Testament. The rise and dominion of the Little Horn is the one sole evil against which the Spirit of God warns the Church in these two visions. The truth here revealed is also a supplement to those brighter aspects of the visible Church which the New Testament reveals. Yet even the Epistles, while they dwell mainly on the privileges of the Church, contain many scattered warnings of coming evil to which it would be exposed. Now if the power, of which we interpret the Little Horn, can be shown to unite and embody, in a definite form, all the corruption which those Epistles present to us in their first buddings of evil, a strong and invincible proof will be gained of the truth of that interpretation.

Let us take the Epistles, then, in order of time. The prophecy of the man of sin, in 2 Thess. ii., must be passed by ; since, however closely connected with the

subject, it is a direct prediction, and not a warning of the kind which are now to be compared. But the same Epistle, at its close, gives us the notice of an evil, then arising in the Church. "For we hear that there are some among you which walk disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies. Now such we command and exhort by the Lord Jesus, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." Idleness, under spiritual pretences, was thus one first evil of whose presence the Church is warned. And where was this evil ever presented in so complete and systematic a shape, as in the mendicant orders, the main buttress of the Papacy in the middle ages, and established by many solemn constitutions of the Popes themselves? In the Little Horn, then, as explained above, this first warning of the Apostle receives its full solution, and the evil then germinating assumes a permanent and embodied form.

The Epistle to the Galatians is the next in order of time. The evils here warned against are different; the corruption of the Gospel into a doctrine which is no gospel, but a perversion and a snare of souls; the reliance on external rites and ordinances, and the entangling yoke of ceremonial bondage. These are joined also with the instructive caution—"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Read the brief account which Hooker gives, of "the maze the Church of Rome causeth her followers to tread in the matter of justification," and then say, whether the Galatian corruption of the Gospel is not to be found in the kingdom of the Little Horn, complete and full-grown. For the reliance on external rites, it is enough to refer to that one doctrine—'The sacraments of the New Testament do confer grace *ex opere operato*.' For the yoke of bondage which the Little Horn has fully imposed in the Church, we may refer to the sentence of the Capitulars, which the Pope has incorporated in his own decrees, as a state maxim of his government. "In memory of the blessed apostle Peter, let us honour the holy Roman and apostolic see. Wherefore humility must be joined with submission; and,

although a yoke scarcely tolerable were imposed by that holy see, let us bear and tolerate it with pious devotion." Thus all the germs of evil in the churches of Galatia, appear embodied and full-grown in the Papal empire.

The two Epistles to the Corinthians next follow. The first evil there warned against is in the opening chapter. "Now this I say, that every one of you saith I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and *I of Cephas*, and I of Christ." And surely it is remarkable, that this corruption, and the vain boast, *I am of Cephas*, are the very foundation-stone of the whole Papal empire. The name, Cephas, here given to the Apostle, makes the lesson more deeply instructive. In the Greek tongue, πετρος, a stone, and πετρα, a rock, are two distinct terms. But in the Syriac the one term *Cephas* includes either meaning. Now this ambiguity is the very basis on which the proud assumptions of the Papacy are all reared. The first evil noted in the Epistle has, therefore, its full and systematic development in the Church of Rome.

The evils noted in chapters v.—viii., appear more distinctly in the warning of the tenth chapter. Of the five sins there specified, the two central and prominent corruptions are those of fornication and idolatry. How the former of these has been embodied in the decisions of Roman casuists on the marriage of priests as the greater sin; and the latter has leavened the whole system of the Papacy, is needless to detail. If any power could possibly claim to be the great and full exponent of Christian idolatry, the Papacy is that power. Here, again, the vision in Daniel, as explained above, gathers into one the various warnings of the inspired apostle.

The sin which is next specified is the corrupt administration of the Lord's supper. This also is one of the most conspicuous offences of the Church of Rome. The chief difference is, that among the Corinthians there was practical irreverence; in the decrees of the Pope there is open rebellion against the law of Christ. And this is just the contrast which might be expected between the form of the evil amidst the anarchy of a divided

church, and in the stern despotism of an absolute power, like the Little Horn.

The next error reproved among the Corinthians is the abuse of an unknown tongue in the church of God. And this feature also, in its utmost extent, has been adopted by the Bishop of Rome, and embodied among the standing ordinances of his kingdom.

Let us now turn to the epistle to the Romans. The warning which is there offered to the church relates to the subtle and dangerous sin of spiritual pride. "Boast not thyself against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith: be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee."

Such is the warning given by the holy apostle to the primitive church of Rome. But the sin, which he denounced in the very germ, appears in the Roman church of later days in its most conspicuous and flagrant form. Here, again, the little horn, as explained before, gathers around it the full-grown progeny of evils, which the Spirit of God reveals in the epistles in their very birth. Let us only read the headings of successive decretals, and what a contrast do we find to the apostolic warning! The Roman church, we are told, is 'the see of the apostle Peter, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing.' It is 'the hinge and head of all churches, appointed by the Lord himself and no other.' To its vast pre-eminence, as compared with the subjection of other churches, the words are applied. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith, or the saw lift itself up against him that shaketh it?" Again, 'All the church throughout the world knows that the most sacred Roman church has the right to judge all, and that no one is permitted to censure her judgment; and this by virtue of the primacy which the blessed Peter has ever held, and will hold.' Again, in succes-

sive decretals, these boastings appear. 'The Roman church has yielded to no heresy.' 'Reference must be made to the Roman church, whenever the rule of faith is inquired into.' 'The Roman church excels all others in zeal for the Christian religion.' 'The faith which the Roman church commends, does not fear the mouths of others.' 'It is permitted neither to think nor to teach otherwise than the Roman church.' 'The Roman church by the profession of its faith, cuts off the ear of error.' 'He is profane who eats the paschal lamb out of the house of the blessed Peter.'

The other sacred epistles would lead us to a similar result. All the evils which, in the time of the apostles, had begun to germinate in the churches, and hence had become the objects of special warning from the Holy Ghost, will be found, in their complete maturity, embodied in the papal constitutions and laws. Hence the vision of Daniel, when the little horn is thus applied, is in full harmony with the apostolic writings. It sets before us these various evils, mature, and in their corporate form, and then points against them in this striking prophecy the weapons of Divine anger. The spiritual discernment of believers, unaided, might have been too dim to see clearly the nature of an evil so stealthy in its growth, and veiled under such specious forms of holiness, But here marks of the plainest kind are given, to point the warning, and make it sink deep into the consciences of men. The excuses framed for Christian idolatries, the refined distinctions of the schools, the plausible pretence of a final judge of controversy, with the wide range of subjects in debate, might embarrass and distract a simple mind. But here the perplexity is removed. It is easy to determine when the Roman monarchy was divided, and its power shared among separate kingdoms. It is no less easy to ascertain what power then appeared, diverse in kind from the others, and with pretensions far higher than theirs, which reduced them under the yoke of its dominion. All history answers with one voice, the Papacy of

Rome. And hence the various marks of corruption, however plain each separately may be, have their moral force vastly increased as beacons to the church, when they are seen thus united and concentrated in the warning of the sacred vision.

V. The Power here described may be viewed, therefore, as exhibiting the full growth of those corruptions, the early germs of which appeared in the apostolic age. It is hence of deep interest to learn, what aspect of these corruptions is here made the most conspicuous. What is that one evil which gives unity and strength to the manifold apostasy in the church? In other words, by what character is the little horn defined? A little reflection will supply the answer. The prophecy thus becomes a key of the highest importance, to unfold the spiritual character of this mysterious corruption.

Now the papacy, by its own maxims, is a sacred monarchy, in which the successor of St. Peter reigns supreme. The building rests on two main pillars; that St. Peter was appointed an infallible head over his brother apostles, and that the bishop of Rome, as his lawful successor, inherits the same infallibility and supreme power. For, as the decretals inform us, 'that holy see, by the merit of St. Peter, certainly either exalts the illustrious or makes illustrious those whom it exalts.'

On the other hand, the little horn in the vision is defined as a human power, rising in the fourth or Roman empire, and which partakes in the bestial nature of the wild beast whereon it grows, though it assumes a human, and even a divine authority. It has eyes like those of a man, and speaks great words against the Most High.

The nature of the contrast, therefore, is plain. If God has promised, to the vote of a Roman populace, as in the time of Damasus, or of worldly and ambitious cardinals, as in later days, that the object of their choice shall be endued with personal holiness, prophetic inspiration, and infallible wisdom, such a government of the

church might seem perfect and complete. To reject its authority might be a grievous, and possibly, a fatal and deadly sin. But if this notion has no warrant in the inspired word of God, it can be nothing else than a blasphemous fraud of the devil. The body, claiming to be a church, which rests on this for its basis, is resting on a lie. The Pope sinks to the level of his true definition, the worldly ruler of one of the smallest states of the fourth empire. Whatever he claims beyond this will be fiction and delusion, great words of falsehood spoken against the Most High.

The root, then, of the apostasy as here described, may be summed up in one sentence, HUMAN AUTHORITY MADE ABSOLUTE AND SUPREME IN THE THINGS OF GOD. This is the heart from which the pulses of error go forth, to infect every part of Christian doctrine and practice with a deadly poison. To escape from the evils of division, men would erect a final and absolute judge. They are not content to practice forbearance; to give their testimony, each in their own place, against error, and then await the final decision of God himself. They must forestall the time of judgment. They would secure unity by a short and speedy method of their own devising; and lest they should be scattered abroad, they build a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven. And could such an infallible judge really be found on earth, and infallible proofs be given of his claims, the attempt might succeed. But neither of these things is true. There was nothing left but to take a fallible, unholy mortal, and by an enormous fiction to style him infallible and holy, the supreme judge over the faith of all men. The evil was then complete. The authority for a time, might be used mainly in favour of gospel truth and sound doctrine. But meanwhile the faith of the church was lifted from its sure basis in the word of God, applied by His Spirit to the conscience, and came to rest solely on the authority of man. Its outward form might continue the same, but its nature was secretly changed. It was no longer the reasonable

faith of the true Christian, but a servile bondage, delusion, and darkness. Thus, by slow and sure steps, the union of the early church was replaced by one of an opposite kind. The bond of Christian fellowship was no longer a simple affiance in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation ; but a blind submission of the will and prostration of the judgment to the vain and boastful pretensions of the little horn.

The prophecy, then, is not what some would gladly describe it to be, a coarse engine of controversial calumny, flung blindly and at hazard into the ranks of an enemy, in the hope that it will explode and do mischief. It is an exact and divine key, which reveals to a thoughtful mind the true nature of that grand controversy which has long harassed the church of Christ. In this wide field of debate, the question which recurs at every point lies between the authority of God and the authority of man. In the Rule of Faith, are we supplied with ample evidence, which attests the claims of God's written word, its full sufficiency, its clearness, its authority over the conscience as the word of the living God? Or are we at the mercy of an earthly monarch, an Italian prince, to fix at his pleasure what traditions are Divine, to interpret the written word into whatever doctrine he pleases, and add to it written decrees and unwritten customs, as no less binding than the voice of God himself? In the way of salvation, are we to rest on the word of God, proclaiming with loud voice to the sinner, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved?" Or must we receive from the prince of Ravenna and Rome whatever terms of salvation he chooses to prescribe, submission to his absolute sway, implicit faith in his dogmas, penances, indulgences, worship of the Virgin, worship of saints, nay even of relics and bones of the dead, and a cross of wood? In the faith of the sacraments, are we to believe the inspired word, "As oft as ye eat this *bread* and drink this *cup*, ye show forth the Lord's death till he come?" Or must we believe, because it is affirmed under a curse by the ruler

of the seven hills, that the substance of bread is vanished away, and replaced by the Godhead, the manhood, the flesh and bones of the risen Saviour? In the practice of the sacrament, must we obey the voice of Christ, saying to us, "Drink ye all of it?" Or must we bow rather to the decree of an Italian ruler, that notwithstanding the words of Christ, and the practice of the early church, the laity must not partake of the cup; and that they who demand it are heretics, to be sought out zealously and put to death, whenever prudential motives will allow? And so throughout the whole range of doctrine the same question everywhere is at stake. Have we grounds for solid assurance of the truth in the word of God itself? Or are the scriptures so dark, and truth so uncertain, that we must all be sceptics at heart; with one sole proviso, that we adopt with blind submission all the decrees and interpretations of the bishop of Rome? Into this one inquiry every other resolves itself, in the great controversy which divides the church. The vision before us reveals the true nature of the conflict. It is a contest between the voice of God's Spirit, pleading directly with man's conscience by His holy word, and the impious pretensions, and usurped dominion of the little horn.

VI. There is, however, one difficulty which still remains, and requires a brief explanation. It seems to many Christians unnatural to apply the emblem of this vision, where so much truth is mingled with error as in the Roman Church. This, as they imagine, savours more of zeal than of charity, and suits better with the jaundiced eye of prejudice than the calm judgment of candour and truth. They profess, and often perhaps sincerely, to be afraid lest a good cause should be injured by overcharged statements; and numbers recoil blindly into the gulf of Romish error. And doubtless, if these prophecies are applied in a flippant, harsh, or censorious temper, these effects must follow. There will be a revulsion in candid minds, which will make

them doubly open to the sophistries of Rome. To treat such solemn passages as if they merely furnished convenient nicknames of reproach, must be a foul sin both against God and man. Such a style of advocacy would make the clearest truths appear suspicious. But let us see whether the application itself, apart from the sin or error of those who maintain it, is fairly open to this rebuke and censure.

The objection, then, derives all its force from the impression that the little horn must symbolize a power of unmixed evil. This is silently assumed by all those writers who argue against the fulfilment of this vision. Now the papacy, in the concrete, is not liable, they maintain, to so foul a charge, and cannot therefore be the power really designed by the Spirit of God.

But where in the prophecy do we find a warrant for this view ? No such declaration appears in the vision. The little horn is described as evil ; but so also are the three first beasts, and the fourth itself before that horn has arisen. Yet Daniel and his brethren held a high office in the kingdom of Babylon. Even Nebuchadnezzar himself appears to have become at last a true penitent, and a servant of God. The care of Darius for the prophet, and his touching concern for his safety and welfare, are conspicuous in the sacred text. Cyrus had been for centuries announced by name as the deliverer and protector of Israel. Alexander honoured the high priest of God, and offered sacrifices in His temple. The Jews were favoured by Ptolemy, and the Scriptures translated under his royal patronage. Antiochus the great gave orders to repair and beautify God's temple. When we pass on to the times of Roman history, the same truth reappears. Many striking examples are found there also, of natural and moral excellence ; and even the early Christians formed an integral part of the Empire, and St. Paul himself was a citizen of Rome. So far as the precedents of the vision can guide us, the emblem must import predominant, but not unmingled evil.

The wider analogies of Scriptures lead us to the very same conclusion. Three powers of evil are there revealed, against which the Christian is bound to an unceasing warfare. How then are they revealed? Is it in an open and undisguised form, or as blended with the good in close and seductive union?

If there be one power of evil which, more than others, we might expect to find revealed in a total separation from all that is holy, it is that spirit whose very name is, the wicked one. Yet how is Satan revealed in the word of God? For long ages his very existence, as a spirit and a distinct person, is scarcely affirmed. The first time when he appears in his own character and name, is in the court of heaven, mingled with the sons of God. Where his name occurs a second time, it is assumed by the Angel of the covenant, when He met Balaam, and rebuked him in the way. "Behold, I came out as a Satan unto thee." A third time his name occurs in the numbering of Israel; and there the same action is ascribed to him, which in the parallel history is directly assigned to the hand of God. In a later prophet he appears once more; but it is in the court of heaven, at the right hand of the high priest, and before Jehovah, the Son of God. Even in the New Testament, Satan and his angels are declared to have still had access to the heavenly places, and their casting down is clearly referred to a time still future in the apostolic age.

Now this view, drawn from the uniform language of Scripture, differs widely from the crude notions which many Christians entertain. Satan appears, not as the frightful bugbear of a childish superstition; nor even, as in the poetry of Milton, a gloomy form, intrenched with the scars of thunder, and with every dark passion written on his brow. No, rather, seductive as the wily serpent, and beautiful as an angel of light, with access amidst the holy angels to the presence of God. It was not until four thousand years of sufferance had passed, and the Son of God had become incarnate, and died on the cross, that the prince of this world was cast out,

and began to fall, like lightning, from heaven. Even now, the power of this mighty enemy is neither destroyed, nor conspicuous to the eye. He still deceives the nations, and under specious shows and semblances of good, carries on the mighty projects of his kingdom of darkness.

It is the same with the world, the second great enemy of the Christian. The Spirit of God denounces it in language the most awful and severe. Its friendship is enmity with God. All that it contains is not of the Father. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, are the dark elements of which it is composed. It hated the Lord of heaven, and hates his followers; whoever will be its friend is the enemy of God. Do we then find this hateful enemy in open hostility, and undisguised separation from all that is good? No rather, but blended with it in mysterious union. This world, viewed in one light, so hateful, in another is the object of God's infinite love. It includes all men, of every nation, our brethren after the flesh; whom we are bound to love as ourselves, and to pray ever for their welfare. It includes those rulers and governors who are powers ordained of God, and His ministers for good. It includes, with no sensible mark to distinguish and separate them, the Church militant itself, and all its many heirs of eternal glory. The contrast and line of separation is invisible, save only to the eye of God. Nay, even in the sight of God, it is now imperfect and incomplete. Conscience still remains in the unconverted, a witness for heaven; while sin and corruption still abound even in true converts. The ideal contrast, hereafter to be completed, is vast and momentous; but, in the present life, the outward line of separation often melts away into an imperceptible shade.

The same remark applies to the third and last enemy of the soul. The flesh, in its own nature, is the contrast of the spirit. The carnal mind is enmity against God. Yet although the spirit and the flesh, the new nature and the old, are contrary one to the other, still they

meet ever in the same person, and the rival powers find a lodgment and a home within the same breast. The great Apostle who lamented in deep sorrow, "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing,—who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" could also declare, with equal sincerity and truth, of his own state, "The grace of our God was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." In themselves the principles were most diverse and opposite; but still, to the outward view, they have always been strangely blended together in a close and mysterious union.

These analogies apply, with all their force, to explain the emblem of this prophecy. They do more than blunt the edge of the popular objection; they convert it into a powerful argument for the interpretation already given. If the evil power here described, in the greatness of its influence, resembles the three great enemies of the soul, we may expect to find the same resemblance in the form and manner of its temptations. We shall have to detect it, not in some gloomy isolation of wickedness, that betrays at once its own dark birthplace; but entwined with the purest forms of goodness, and fastening itself, like a subtle parasite, beneath the shadow of the highest and holiest truths. If these analogies have any force, it will need for its detection the keenest moral discernment, to sever between the light and the darkness, the good and the evil. Nay, the same parallel will warrant us in proceeding one step further. We may infer that the power here described would be at first most difficult to discern in its true nature. Its union with truth and holiness would be intimate and close, and its evil character would require deep spiritual wisdom for its detection and exposure. But time will by degrees unmask its deformity; till at length, before its fall, the separation shall be complete, and it will stand forth in undisguised rebellion, an open enemy of God and of the Lamb.

The objection to the previous interpretation, from the mingled character of Popery, rests, therefore, on no war-

rant of Scripture, but rather is repugnant to the word of God. The secret apostasy which has vexed the Church is here pourtrayed, in its place, its time of appearance, and its main elements of life. It consists of human worldly authority, which usurps the authority of God, and supplants the true and living faith of the Gospel. Its place is in the midst of the western kingdoms, itself one of the smallest in their number. Its time is when the old empire of Rome was first shattered into fragments, and independent but united sovereignties arose out of its ruins. For ages, however, the evil was closely mixed and combined with many elements of truth and holiness. The separation was gradual, and is still incomplete. The saints were to be worn out, first by subtle and insidious delusions, and then by the sword of open violence. Even to the last, while many of them have been cruelly persecuted, some few at least are entangled and deceived. God has still a people to be called out of Babylon to the very time of her fall; while, on the other hand, the taint of Babylon's sin may extend, more or less, to those who have separated outwardly from her corruptions. But this mingling of good and evil is so far from disproving the application of the prophecy to the Roman church, that it only renders its warning voice more needful. The humble Christian will see, in this very fact, the wisdom and goodness of the Saviour, who has provided his servants with so mighty a safeguard against the perilous and fatal delusion. He will thankfully use the safeguard thus provided for him, not in the bitterness of party zeal, but with a deep and godly sorrow; grieving over that apostasy from the faith, by which the name of his Lord has been so foully dishonoured, and longing for the time when, over the ruins of Babylon, the true church shall arise and shine in the beauty of eternal holiness.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SPIRITUAL LESSONS OF THE PROPHETIC HISTORY.

The course of the sacred visions has now brought us, through the series of the Four Empires, down to the times in which we live. From the age of Daniel to the present day, the events of Providence have confirmed the truth, and sealed the inspiration, of the Divine prophecy. We have now to enter on the mysterious future, and to trace, from the close of these visions, the dim and majestic outline of the glory to be shortly revealed. But to prepare the way for this high and holy subject, it will be useful to review the prophecy already fulfilled, and to examine the great spiritual lessons which the inspired emblems appear designed to convey.

The object of Scripture prophecy is never a bare and naked revelation of future events. Its purpose is to teach the great lesson of righteousness to the nations of the world. It throws light upon the duty of man, and illustrates the moral government of God. The present visions share in this high office. Besides revealing to us the history of the world through past ages, they suggest to us the high standard of personal obedience and national holiness, which will form the glory and blessedness of the world's kingdoms in the happier ages which shall presently arise. Let us endeavour briefly to unfold them in this light, and ascend from the individual to the nation, and thence to the whole commonwealth of the kingdoms of the earth.

Two emblems are here used to describe the corruption of human states in past ages, the great image and the four beasts of prey. That these imply two main aspects of evil, will be more evident when we compare them with the later prophecy of Revelation. There also two prominent forms of evil appear, the beast and his image; and it is the honourable distinction of the saints that over both of these they have gotten the victory. False religion or superstition, and worldly ambition, with its natural fruits of cruelty and crime, are vividly pourtrayed by this twofold emblem. The redemption of nations from this double fall must begin with their separate members. Let us, therefore, trace, from the emblems themselves, the bright and holy contrast, which is waiting to be realized in the coming kingdom of God.

I. Man, in his state of nature, is dead in trespasses and sins. In the symbols of the prophecy, he is an atom of the dazzling but lifeless image; a member incorporated in the wild beast of prey. The first work of redemption is to deliver him from this state. He is then separated from the senseless image, and ingrafted into the true Vine. The bestial nature is crucified and done away; and he becomes a living member in the body of Christ. His religion itself was, before, only the worship of a vain idol; but it now becomes a pure and holy worship of God the Saviour, in spirit and in truth. He is no longer an atom of dull and lifeless clay in the feet of the image. The breath of a new life has been breathed into his nostrils; and, like Adam on the day of creation, he stands erect once more in the image of God.

The means of this great and effectual change is the word of truth. By this alone we become the first-fruits of God's redeemed creatures. The fulness of truth in that word is a key to the nature of the regenerate life of the soul. The Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel, all concur in this new creation, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work."

And first of all, the Christian citizen, when the image

of vain splendour is replaced by the mountain of holiness, will have the law of God written in his heart. The beauty, and depth, and holiness of this part of God's word will then be seen, as they never were seen before. That law, which for thirty years it was the sole work of the Son of God, when incarnate, to fulfil; that law, which it is the main promise of the new covenant to write in the hearts of God's people, will then shine forth in all the secret beauty of its wisdom and holiness.

The records of creation will be written on the heart. The redeemed citizen will thus realize the divine presence in all things. The truth of God will be seen on every side. Science, in all its discoveries, will lead his thoughts at once to the Great Architect, and every fresh truth it reveals will awaken a deeper adoration of the King of Heaven. The ceaseless presence of Him who is infinite in power and in wisdom, who called light into being with His voice, and planned the courses of the stars, will raise the soul into the blessed and holy state of continual prayer and thanksgiving.

The history of the fall, and of the early ages of mankind, will concur to the same work of spiritual redemption. There the spirit will learn its own corruption and guilt, and while it gazes on the solemn judgments of God, and the brief memorials of a perished world, will grow in deep humility, and turn with earnest and longing hope to the promise and covenant of the God of Abraham. The prospect of the kingdom of Christ will shine with redoubled beauty, in contrast with those dark ages of sin and sorrow; and the history of the patriarchs will bring the sense of God's providence and grace into close and delightful contact with all the varied events and engagements of daily life, hallowing its familiar scenes with the rich and abundant tokens of Divine condescension and love.

The Christian who has thus learned to commune with God in all his works of creation, and in the history of the fall to sound the depths of his own spirit, will then find every other part of God's law rich in treasures of

Divine wisdom. Every command, however trivial it may seem, will be to him a fresh pledge of the constant oversight and providence of the supreme Lawgiver. All nature will be one storehouse of parables, full of the deepest lessons of righteousness and grace. Every ritual command will reveal some moral truth of universal application, while it reclaims some circumstance of life to the great end of spiritual instruction, and contains some type and earnest of the good things to come. The spirit can thus rove through these Divine ordinances, as an ample field, where every step reveals unexpected treasures, and fresh truths gleam forth every moment, to light it on the road to eternal blessedness. Especially there will be impressed on the mind the great truths of God's ceaseless presence, His spotless holiness, the need of an atoning sacrifice, the delights of holy worship and social love, and the vast and immeasurable ascent which leads from the bondage of Egyptian corruption to the holy happiness of the kingdom of God.

The citizen, thus redeemed by the law of God from the love of sin, and urged to continual advances in obedience and holiness, will find in the sacred prophecies a still wider field of spiritual meditation. The providence of God, through four thousand years, is there spread before him ; and becomes a glorious mirror, where all the Divine perfections may be seen in their harmonious display. The maxims of God's righteous government are revealed in the rise and fall of mighty nations, and the course of successive generations of mankind. The veil is removed, at least in part, from the wonderful scheme of His eternal counsels ; and the events of each passing age are combined in one vast exhibition of triumphant holiness and love. By this delightful and glorious vision, spiritual selfishness will be driven away, the soul will awake to the only pure ambition, and long to attain the high dignity of a fellow-worker with the all-wise and everlasting God.

The lessons of the Gospel complete those which are taught by the law and the prophets, and crown the

whole work of redemption in the soul. The riches of Divine grace in the birth, the death, and the resurrection of the Son of God, will add to the holiness of the law, and the wisdom revealed in the prophecies, the highest and purest elements of heavenly love. As the spirit rises towards this full standard of redemption, the heart will become a treasury of all pure affections, and the understanding will be stored with the rich variety of inspired truth ; while every verse of Scripture becomes an inlet whereby streams of grace and blessing are conveyed to the soul.

He who is thus renewed in the spirit of his mind, is no longer a part in the great and dazzling image. The vain shows and idols of superstition have lost their power. He is become a lively member in the body of Christ. The emblem of the ravening beast is one which ceases to describe him ; he is transferred into a higher and holier fellowship. The fierce and bestial appetites are subdued. Ambition, pride, and cruelty, are driven from their seat in the heart, and mercy and kindness are enthroned in their room. Every thought and action begin now to be marked by pure, spiritual, and heavenly love.

The redeemed citizen thus reverses the second emblem of the visions. He no longer scatters fear or terror, like the heroes of Roman greatness, but becomes a fountain of social happiness. Enriched with Divine truth, and moulded on the example of the Redeemer, he learns to dispense the blessings he has received. The purest forms of love, in its dignity and tenderness, revive and flourish. The charities of life all cluster around him, and domestic happiness and social affection appear in a thousand aspects of unknown and mysterious beauty. Each family becomes a lively image of the great family in heaven ; and the confluence of many hearts, each of them happy in the love of God, adds an overflowing fulness to the streams of joy and blessedness.

II. But the prophecy leads us further to contemplate the true character and blessedness of a righteous nation. This subject is indeed united very closely with the former. Regenerate and holy men can alone compose a truly Christian kingdom. They are the living stones which alone are adapted for a structure so noble and heavenly. It is true that a state may be established on a Christian basis, while many of its people continue openly heathen, or unconverted and unregenerate in heart. But the healthy action of national religion will then be greatly obscured and impaired. Till the whole nation, each for themselves, have yielded their hearts unto God, the ordinances of the state will fall very short of the high standard of a Christian kingdom. But still, such a kingdom is something far more and more noble, than a loose, undefined multitude of pious men. Out of the social union of the state new relations arise, new duties to man and to God ; and these, no less than the heart of each separate Christian, need to be hallowed by the controlling energy of Divine truth.

The duty of national religion is indeed one of the plainest lessons which these prophecies convey. The nations, in their fallen and unholy condition, are only toes of the image, or horns of some devouring beast. But this clearly cannot be their right character. It is an evil and unnatural state, from which the Gospel was designed to set them free. It marks the prevalence of sin and ungodliness, which debases them below their true and proper standing in the sight of heaven. Two forms of national irreligion are thus denounced ; superstition, implied in the idol image, and ambitious selfishness or cruelty, prefigured in the emblem of the four beasts of prey. For both these grand evils one only remedy can be found, a hearty national dedication to the fear, the worship, and the service of the living God.

That national atheism, which many sincere and devout Christians, entangled in the delusions of the last time, would advocate as the perfection of wisdom, is in truth everywhere denounced in the word of God. Kings and

princes, we are there taught, are the vicegerents and ministers of the Most High. From Him they derive their authority, and to Him they owe an unreserved allegiance, Christ is the Prince of the kings of the earth ; and to banish the truth of Christ from the counsels and ordinances of states is direct rebellion against His supreme and rightful dominion. That such a view of national duty should have ever obtained among any of the real servants of God, is one of the strongest proofs of Satanic delusion. To purge the laws and ordinances of nations from all reference to His word and will, who is the only source of power, and the sole fountain of national blessings, is surely among the most monstrous follies by which the enemy of souls could deceive the people of Christ. The law of God condemns the doctrine with one voice, as foolish and wicked. There we have set before us the example of a chosen nation, a pattern to the apostate kingdoms of the world ; where every law of social order and happiness was linked with religious duty, and blended with the acts and ordinances of holy worship. It seems as if one main object of the Divine wisdom were to shew us, in their history, the inseparable connexion between a nation's public consecration to God's service, and the enjoyment of all social peace, union, and happiness. The two tables of the law were placed together in the ark of the covenant. And they were united, not less closely, in every ordinance which God enjoined for his chosen people. The great effort of Jewish apostasy, in every age, was to divorce these asunder, and to find national peace and comfort, apart from national obedience to their Divine Lawgiver. Against this one fatal error, this deadly sin, the judgments of God were armed from one generation to another. The doctrine of national indifference to religious truth, is condemned, by every page of the Jewish history, as a fatal and perilous delusion.

But the voice of prophecy is no less distinct in its condemnation of the same error. There we learn that when the earth's redemption shall be complete, national religion shall everywhere triumph and prevail. It

warns us, indeed, of an apostasy in the last days, when rulers and people shall say in their madness, "Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us." But the success of that delusion shall be transitory, and it will be followed by the agony of a deep and sorrowful repentance. "The Gentiles will come from the ends of the earth, saying, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanities, and things wherein there is no profit." All nations shall then bow, with a public homage, to the yoke of the Son of God. "Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship." This will be the sole tenure of national safety and deliverance. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, that nation shall be utterly consumed." He who is the Prince of the kings of the earth will then manifest that this is no vain title. He will enter openly on the exercise of His high office; and every kingdom which forbears to render Him its public and national homage, will be condemned as an open traitor and rebel against the King of kings.

The testimony of the Gospel is not less full and clear. The powers that be are ordained of God, and are his ministers for good. The kingdom of Christ, whose source and origin is from above, not from this world, but from heaven, is yet a supreme dominion, to which every knee must bow, and which claims the undivided allegiance of all the nations upon earth. To bear witness to this kingly power, given him by the Father, was one great object for which the Saviour came into the world. (John viii. 37.) His parting words reveal the same truth, and claim, on this ground, the obedience of the nations. "All power is given to me in heaven and earth." And therefore, whatever power, in public or private, does not acknowledge His supremacy, and take His will for its law, and His word for its guide, cannot escape the guilt of a foul and unnatural rebellion.

What then are the lessons of national duty which the emblems of this prophecy hold out to our view? They result clearly from a close examination of the symbols.

and of the history which illustrates these sacred visions.

The first duty is, the public acknowledgment and worship of the living God. This truth appears conspicuous in the head of the golden image. When the king, in his pride, arrogated to himself the glory of his kingdom, a voice came to him from heaven,—"O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee; and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and seven times shall pass over thee; until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." "And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven; and mine understanding returned unto me; and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom from generation to generation." "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride He is able to abase."

Every part of this magnificent narrative breathes the same lesson. The monarch, the official head of the Empire, the representative of the whole image, is condemned for his pride in refusing to honour the Almighty. When his understanding returns to him, his first work is to praise and magnify the supreme authority of God. He sends forth a public decree to all the nations of the world, to attest his repentance, and offer his public and willing homage to the King of heaven. The Holy Spirit has recorded this for our learning, as a lasting memorial both of the duty of rulers, and of His own jealousy against ungodly nations.

The severe rebuke of the prophet to Belshazzar glows with the same truth. Every sentence speaks the duty of a national acknowledgment of God's hand, and of a public reverence for His word and holy ordinances. Even in a heathen state, sacrilegious ungodliness of the

rulers, after light imparted, was the signal of immediate and final destruction.

The first aim, then, of a redeemed and holy nation, will be the glory of God. National atheism, indifference to Divine truth, will be banished from its counsels. Public acts of worship will attest its reverence for the King of nations. Its treaties and engagements with surrounding states will not rest on the treacherous ground of mere expediency, but will be observed with faithfulness, in deep reverence for the God of truth. Its laws and ordinances will be based on the maxims of Divine righteousness. Its rules and principles of policy will be drawn from God's most holy word. Its rulers will account themselves His ministers for good. And as the highest good of immortal beings, without which all other things are a vain shadow, is their preparation for eternal glory, so to promote this high object will be the true aim of righteous and Christian governments. They can never, without a foul apostasy, abdicate their high office, either by resigning it to a wicked ecclesiastical usurper, or by treating their subjects as if they were to perish in the grave like beasts of the field. For if, in the kingdom of Messiah, even the bells of the horses are to be holiness unto the Lord, how much more should 'holiness to the Lord' be inscribed on all the laws and statutes and ordinances of Christian kingdoms. To strip them of this character, and reduce them to the blind guess-work of expediency, planning a happiness and plenty where God is disowned, is to become accomplices of Satan in his cursed attempts to banish Christ from his own kingdom. From such a fearful delusion may God preserve all his true servants! Public, national worship of the true God, as now revealed in the Son of his love, is the first duty of a Christian government which these emblems reveal.

The next duty of a righteous state is provision for the wants of the needy. For rulers are God's ministers for good. And for this end, the first requisite is a supply of the needful sustenance of life; without which, other

and higher blessings are intercepted, and cannot reach those who are perishing with hunger. This lesson is doubly taught us in the inspired narrative. The spreading tree, which the monarch saw in his dream, is made a beautiful emblem of human government, when it fulfils its divine purpose. The first character by which it is described, is that the fruit thereof was much, and in it was meat for all. And when the prophet had revealed to him the impending judgment, he gives this advice to the king.—' Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thy iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity."

Such then, the word of God being our guide, is the first social object of human government; to secure food for all, and preserve the poor and needy by acts of mercy. The chief means by which these ends are to be accomplished are revealed elsewhere in the word of God. First, by encouraging that spirit of industry, of order, and obedience, without which penury and want must infallibly abound. Next, by repressing the spirit of luxury and covetousness, and the insatiable desire of gain, and directing the national industry to the supply of true, not factitious wants; by encouraging, after the pattern of the Divine law, the culture of the soil, instead of nursing the feverish speculations of mercantile ambition. Thirdly, and finally, by a direct but frugal provision for the really indigent and helpless; such a provision as may stimulate by its example the private benevolence of those whom God has blessed with more abundant plenty; without offering a bounty on idleness and improvidence, or stifling by its prodigality the natural emotions of compassion towards the poor and needy.

But when this first and more immediate object of national wisdom has been attained, there are higher and nobler duties which still remain. A Christian ruler is an immortal being, to whom the Almighty God, for wise reasons, has given a large trust of power and influence over his fellow immortals. This power, in its full extent, he is bound to use for his Maker. He is under a solemn

obligation to promote, by every means at his disposal, the spiritual welfare of the subject kingdom. Whether as lawgiver or judge, as the fountain of honour or the dispenser of mercy, in every privilege of his high station, he is to act as in the view of God's judgment-seat, remembering that the soul of every subject is an heir of immortality. Crime must be punished, not merely on the low and slippery ground of expediency and prevention, but as an offence against the true dignity of man, and the supreme authority of God. The rights of property are to be maintained; but its possessors must ever be reminded that they are stewards for Christ, not absolute owners; and that their stewardship demands a careful attention to the wants and spiritual welfare of their fellow men. The abuses of avarice, the oppressions of power, should they exist or find entrance, will be pruned with an unsparing hand. No false and foolish theories will be made an excuse for encouraging trade, like the car of Juggernaut, to run without restraint a headlong career of its own selfishness, under the mask of freedom, though thousands of victims perish under its wheels. Neither wealth, nor art, nor military prowess will be made the final aim, but the temporal and eternal happiness of the subject people; a happiness to be found only in obedience to the Divine will, the knowledge of the gospel, and the hope of life eternal.

Let us combine together these separate elements of holiness in a righteous nation, and how delightful a prospect they will open to our view! Each Christian, regenerate by Divine grace, becomes a fountain of peace and happiness in his own sphere. The Law with all its deep treasures of wisdom and purity, the Providence of God revealed in His word, with its hidden and countless wonders, are stored in his heart, and crowned with all the unspeakable grace and loveliness which streams in the Gospel from the cross of the incarnate Saviour. Thus renewed in the spirit of his mind, he becomes the centre of a circle, happy like himself, and where love, in its purest forms, beams from eye to eye, and is re-

flected from heart to heart. He who is the God of all the families of Israel sheds down his own immediate blessing. Every spring of the heart overflows with happiness, and every faculty of the soul rejoices in the full vision of Divine truth. The tenderness and deep sympathies of human affection rise continually to a higher dignity, and shine with a clearer beauty; while the bridegroom and the bride, the parent and the child, have their eyes ever fixed on the cross and the resurrection of the Incarnate Son of God.

Composed of such families, the holy nation cannot fail to be happy and glorious. The cities, no longer the abodes of avarice and squalid misery, become the scenes of holy and united worship, where the solemn feasts are held to the God of love. The vallies and the hills are witnesses to the secret prayer of the happy husbandman, or vocal with his song of praise, to Him who has covered the earth with beauty, and who fills the hearts of His people with food and gladness. The laws become images of the laws of God, the work of patient wisdom, guarding against the evils of selfishness and wrong, and cherishing all things pure and lovely into a more vigorous growth. The nation is no longer, like the worthless profligate, driven by its own vice and luxury to depend on those around it for its uncertain happiness, or even for the food to supply its pauper multitudes. Its wants are moderate, its industry untiring, and bent upon objects of solid and lasting use. The blessing of God on its diligent labour provides an abundant supply of needful provision, and wise and watchful charity secures its right and healthy distribution. No misers are consumed with the canker of their own gold and silver, and no children of want pine in hopeless misery. The needful provision for the body supplied, all the energy of skill, and labour, and wisdom, is not left to waste itself in pernicious follies, but is turned upward to the high pursuits of knowledge, holiness, and eternal truth. Each child is trained up for immortality. The range of past providence and future glory, the deep

wonders of the law, and the mysteries of the gospel, open before each an immeasurable field of growing wisdom and delightful contemplation. The brightest scenes of fancy are surpassed and thrown into the shade ; when ten thousand hearts, capable of divine purity and immortal glory, are uniting all their earnest endeavours to secure the largest and fullest blessings which a God of infinite goodness is willing to bestow. ' Since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him.' God hath seen it, and He only. His eye, even now, is beholding and rejoicing in the prospect of this unbounded happiness ; which He will shortly pour down to refresh the desolate heritages of this fallen world.

Such is the delightful vision which these prophecies, by their implied contrast, open before us. This is the high standard which every Christian, and most of all every Christian statesman, should keep ever in view. His aim should be, to raise the nation of his birth from the worship of vain shadows, like the idol image, to the devout and holy worship of the God of heaven ; to banish atheism from its counsels, and ungodliness from its cities, and enthrone, in the hearts of its citizens and the deliberations of its senate, the supreme authority of Christ, the Son of God. He will seek to turn it from the wasting course of cruel ambition, bent on conquest, and ravenous for its prey ; to the harder but holier work, of rooting out its own corruptions, subduing the natural appetites and passions that range within, and uniting all its members in one holy rivalry of zeal in the cause of truth, and desires for the salvation of their fellow-men. Even though we may not hope to reach the high standard, till the fourth empire has passed away, and a new era has dawned on the fallen earth, still every step of approach is a cause for gladness ; and no effort of love, which has this for its aim, can ever fail to receive a large blessing from the God of heaven.

But these visions of joy, thus dimly and faintly unfolded, are not fairy dreams, which cheat the fancy, and can never be fulfilled. The prophecy now leads us on to the untrodden future, where every step will be bright with mystery ; and reveals to us those hopes as blessed realities, which might seem at first to be only fruitless and Utopian dreams of an idle imagination. The ideal of a righteous nation will yet be abundantly fulfilled. The four Empires, with their dark features of superstition and cruelty, will only lend a brighter contrast to that kingdom which shall ensue. The vision of holiness and happiness which we faintly attempt to form, while buried in the thick atmosphere of worldliness, will be far surpassed by the bright realities of the kingdom of God. And after our imagination has exhausted its powers to combine the various elements of truth and loveliness into one landscape of delight, the Spirit of God still renews to us the language of hope and mystery, and says to the faithful Christian, as to Nathanael of old, " Thou shalt see greater things than these." Let us now pass, from the review of three thousand years of sin and sorrow, to the promise of that world to come, and trace the course of the millennial blessedness, and the everlasting kingdom of God our Saviour.

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE MILLENNIUM.

These visions have now led us in unbroken course, through the range of the Four Empires, from the time of Daniel to the latter days of the Roman power. The times in which we live plainly belong to the fourth empire, and answer to its latest stage, when it has been long divided into separate kingdoms. The prophecy, therefore, announces the near approach of a glorious kingdom of God. The whole range of providence is tending to this blessed consummation, as its final goal. The hopes of the Church, from the beginning, have been fixed on the same event ; and the whole creation travaileth in pain together, with earnest desire, until the glory, so long promised, shall at length be revealed.

The nature of this kingdom, however, has been the subject of much controversy and debate in the Church of God. For here we enter on the field of unaccomplished prophecy, which many devout Christians conceive it dangerous and even impossible to explore. The predictions themselves are plainer, and less involved in symbols, than many which relate to the past ; but the mere fact that they refer to things future has led many to regard their meaning as uncertain and doubtful. The variety of opinions, which have actually obtained in the Church from very early times, has deepened this impression. It is needful then to advance with cautious

steps, in establishing those truths which the word of God unfolds to us as the hope of the Church. Instead of confining ourselves to the visions of Daniel, we must include the whole range of Scripture evidence on the revealed order of the Divine dispensations.

The Millennium, or thousand years of rest predicted in the Apocalypse, has naturally formed the central point in each various interpretation. According as this reign of the saints is past or future, definite or indefinite in its length, and figurative or literal in its nature, all the hopes of the Church will be moulded into a different form and outline. To fix its true place is the first essential, that we may form a clear anticipation of the good things to come.

The following are the chief varieties of opinion on this great subject. First, that all the prophecies have been long fulfilled, and that the millennium was past in the days of Constantine. This view has but few advocates, and does the most manifest violence to the word of God. Secondly, that the millennium began with the nativity or crucifixion, or the accession of Constantine, and therefore is now past; but the rebellion which follows is still future, and the same with the last Antichrist. This opinion prevailed widely from the fourth century till after the Reformation, and is the general view of Roman Catholic divines at the present day. Thirdly, that the millennium is future, but preceded by the second advent, and the resurrection both of the just and of the unjust. This opinion has very few advocates, and may be passed by, since it never has had any currency in the Church. Fourthly, that the millennium is future, preceded only by a figurative resurrection, in the wide conversion of the Jews and Gentiles, and followed by the second advent, and the general resurrection of all the dead. This view has prevailed widely in the Protestant Churches, but only within the last century and a half. Fifthly, that the millennium is future, but preceded by the coming of Christ, and the literal resurrection of the just, or at

least of the martyrs, and followed by the resurrection of the rest of the dead. This opinion was general for the first three centuries, but afterwards died very much away; till it was revived by a large number of Protestant expositors, after the early times of the Reformation. A sixth view is an extension of the last, or of the strictly millennarian interpretation. It agrees in the doctrine of a future millennium, marked by a literal resurrection at its beginning and its close. But it views this as merely the porch to a kingdom of God upon earth, which shall last for ever; and wherein the glory of the risen saints, in the celestial city, will combine itself with the blessedness of redeemed generations in the new earth, who shall walk in the light of the new Jerusalem.

Three inquiries, then, will have to be answered, before we can have clear and firm views on the future hopes of the Church. First, whether the millennium be past or future? Secondly, what is the general nature of that kingdom which ensues afterwards? Thirdly, what is the true place of the Second Advent, before the millennium, or after its close? In the chapters which follow, it will be endeavoured to answer these inquiries by copious evidence from the word of God.

But here, on the verge of this great subject, we do well to pause, and to meditate on its grandeur, that we may search with a holy reverence into these Divine mysteries. These glorious hopes of the Church, even before the worlds were made, were the great object of the divine counsels. The events of six thousand years have been one continual preparation for this eternal kingdom. Compared with this greatness and majesty, the mightiest empires of this world are only like a passing shadow. Through tears and blood, through ages of strife and agony, the way has been preparing for these triumphs of Divine goodness; and all the sufferings of this present time, in their collective vastness, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which is hereafter to be revealed. How needful it is, while searching into

these deep things of God, to remember how sacred they are, and the unspeakable grandeur and blessedness of those hopes of the Church which we endeavour to explore!

Let us now examine, in order, the various opinions concerning the millennial kingdom; with a view, first of all, to this simple inquiry, whether the Millennium be already past or still future.

The first opinion, which places the close of the millennium at or before the time of Constantine, is so preposterous itself, and held by so few writers, that it is needless to refute it at length. It reduces a thousand years, six times mentioned, to the scanty measure of three hundred, or even of forty; an error of itself fatal to the theory. It places the binding of Satan in a period when the Scriptures themselves openly declare that he was most active in his temptations. Finally, it makes the new heavens and earth, wherein righteousness was to dwell, to have been polluted, for ages, with abounding and atrocious wickedness. Such a view is not an interpretation, but rather a direct and open contradiction, of the word of God.

The second opinion, in its most consistent form, which dates the millennium from the days of Constantine, and its close from the irruptions of the Turks, has had a far wider currency, and does less violence to the sacred text. It prevailed, with minor varieties, for nearly a thousand years, and is still adopted by most Roman divines. It was also, for a century after the Reformation, the more usual view of Protestant expositors, and therefore claims an exact inquiry.

To prove that this opinion, however wide its prevalence in former days, is entirely erroneous, we need only to compare the prophecy with its context. Every part will then supply clear proofs, that the millennium is future and yet unfulfilled.

The connexion of the Prophecy must first be determined. The whole of the Apocalypse, after the seven vials, will be found to resolve itself plainly into three

visions, of which the limits and leading objects are the following :—

The Fall of Babylon :	Rev. xvii. 1—xix. 10.
The Reign of Christ :	—— xix. 11—xxi. 8.
The New Jerusalem :	—— xxi. 9—xxii. 9.

These are followed by a short general conclusion to the whole series. The account of the Millennium occurs in the second of the three visions, which must therefore be examined minutely.

The vision, in the first place, is unbroken, and continuous in its order. This is true, indeed, of each separate vision throughout the Apocalypse ; but here it is needful to prove the continuity of this one alone. Now for this purpose we have only to read it with care from its beginning to its close. Every part is so connected with the rest as to leave no room for transposition or inversion.

First of all, the opening of heaven, in Rev. xix. 11, clearly prepares the way for the appearance of Him whose name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven follow Him when He appears. The proclamation of the angel implies that these armies are now ready to execute the judgment upon God's enemies. That judgment next succeeds ; the beast and the false prophet are sentenced, and the rest are slain with the sword. The remaining adversary, the Dragon, from whom the beast and the false prophet had derived their power, is then chained in the abyss. Upon this follows at once the blessedness of the Church, and lasts for a thousand years. This time having expired, Satan is loosed from his prison, and deceives the nations once more. A last confederacy is formed against the camp of the saints, and consumed by fire from heaven. The devil now at length receives his final sentence. The dead are judged, and the sea gives up those who are therein. This judgment being now complete, there is no more sea, but the new heavens and new earth are announced, and the holy city is seen descending from heaven. From the first step of the narrative to the last, there is no room for inversion, without doing violence to the plainest marks of

connexion and moral sequence, which bind the whole prediction into one.

From these observations it will evidently follow that the millennium is still future. The events at the close of chapter xix. have plainly never been fulfilled. The Son of man, the Word of God, has not yet appeared in the heavens. And even to waive for the present these marks of a personal Advent, which are here most conspicuous, the same truth is proved abundantly by the other features of the text. For the time is the vintage of wrath. It includes a mighty confederacy of nations, and a visible judgment directly exercised on them from heaven. Above all, it includes that solemn event, the final doom of the beast and the false prophet, who are cast into the lake of fire. No past events can answer at all to the remarkable description. It clearly refers to a judgment still future, and more solemn and impressive than any which the world has witnessed since the days of Noah. And since these events are future, the millennium which follows after them must be future also.

This truth is confirmed by the connexion of this with the preceding Vision. The two are consecutive in time. It is after the fall of Babylon, and while the smoke of her ruin ascends on high, that the voice is heard in heaven—"The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His bride hath made herself ready." The fine linen is then described, in which she is now to be arrayed. And then, in plain allusion to this last event, the opening of the next vision exhibits the armies in heaven, "clothed in fine linen white and clean." The moral connexion is equally plain. The overthrow of Babylon, in which the kings of the earth are instruments, is followed by their own ruin. The internal marks all prove that the second vision succeeds to the first in the order of time.

Now the fall of Babylon is clearly future. For Babylon denotes Rome; the fall here described is total and final; but Rome is still in being. The description is totally unlike the inroads of Alaric or Totila, the only past events that could have a shadow of claim to be its

fulfilment. And since the fall of Babylon is still future, the millennium, which occurs in a later vision, must also be a future event.

These proofs, drawn from the connexion with the previous vision, are confirmed by every mark in the prediction itself. For, in the first place, the binding of Satan has never yet been fulfilled. In the days of the apostles, we have inspired testimony that this great Enemy was free and unchained, and as a roaring lion went to and fro in the earth. The persecutions of the first ages, the bloodshed, havoc, and confusion of later times have never ceased to give proofs of the freedom of this great Adversary, and of his fearful power to deceive the nations. No time can be mentioned, since the rise of the gospel, which does not afford clear marks that this mighty deceiver was still at work busily in the earth.

It is true that the removal of Satanic temptation does not require us to suppose a state of freedom from all sin. But it does naturally imply the absence of all confederacies of evil. The cohesion of wickedness is then withdrawn. Without the secret arts of this mighty builder, the separate grains of ungodliness do not cohere and combine together. Let the history of past ages be tried by this one test, and it will be clear that the predicted binding of the great deceiver has never been fulfilled.

Again, the reign of Christ and His saints, whether figurative or literal, clearly implies a blessedness and glory which the Church has never yet attained. In her purest days she was exposed to bitter persecutions ; and as her outward trials abated, she fell into the worse evils of spiritual declension and inward decay. But in this prediction two elements of happiness plainly meet together, outward peace and exaltation, and inward life and holiness. This union, in the Church at large, has never been witnessed in past years ; and hence we may gather, by the firmest proof, that the promise before us is still awaiting the people of God.

The events that close the millennium also prove that

it is still future. A wide and sudden apostasy is then to seize on the four corners of the earth, and to assemble a vast confederacy against the camp of the saints. The Ottoman irruptions are the only past event to which this prediction could be referred with the least show of reason. But how utterly unlike are these to the prophetic narrative! They were not sudden; but gradual and successive; nor from the four corners of the earth, but from the East only; nor armed against a holy camp of saints, but against a very corrupt empire; nor ended at once by a sudden destruction of fire from heaven, but prevailed gradually, and as gradually have wasted away. Every feature of the vision finds a contrast, not a parallel, in the events of those days.

Lastly, the typical nature of the millennium proves its reference to a future time. The Jewish and Christian Churches have both of them generally received the doctrine, that the seven days of creation represent seven millennia, of which the seventh and last would be a Sabbath of rest. This view may be confirmed by many presumptions, drawn from the word of God. The argument, it is true, would require for its full establishment a wide range of inquiry, since it rests upon two premises, both open to much debate,—the general correctness of the Hebrew numbers in the sacred chronology, and the typical reference of the seven days. But still it commends itself at once to a thoughtful mind by its own simplicity and grandeur; while it gives unity and completeness to all those various proofs, which have established the millennium as a future hope to the whole church of God.

These direct arguments, as they refer to one passage only, lie within a narrow compass, but they are not the less firm and conclusive. Every thoughtful reader of the vision may put his seal to those words in which Mede declares his own conviction. 'As to the matter itself, it rests on the irrefragable sequence in the order of the Apocalypse.' 'Believe me that I have fallen into that opinion through no lightness of mind or preposte-

rous affection; but that after I had tried all other things in vain, at length compelled by the clearness of the matter, I yielded to the paradox.' Indeed, with any simple reader of the text, the surprise must be, how the notion of the millennium being already arrived could have prevailed for so many ages in the Church. But the counsels of God are too vast, and their development too slow, for Christians to receive them readily, however plain the statement of them in His holy word.

To these arguments might be added further presumptions, from the moral and spiritual character of the hope which is thus revealed. It will illustrate brightly the goodness and wisdom of God, that this earth, once so fair and lovely, but for long ages a scene of corruption and death, shall witness a glorious triumph of redemption; and in the very place where sin hath abounded, grace and holiness should much more exceedingly abound. To conceive that, without any such victory of grace here below, the earth shall be burned up and perish for ever, does violence to the purest instincts of the spiritual mind. "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." And in like manner the children of God themselves with the instinctive yearning of love, long earnestly for the time when the creature shall be redeemed from the bondage of corruption. The prospect of the millennium may have been clouded, in former ages, by sensual perversions, or the dreams of a fierce and fanatic zeal. But still, in its own nature, it is a pure and blessed hope, a truth in harmony with all the perfections of God, and full of joy and spiritual delight to the souls of His people.

The interest which this doctrine awakens becomes still more deep and powerful, when it is combined with the view of past history which these visions unfold. Babylon and Persia, Greece and Rome, have appeared in changeful succession. What scene is next to arise, after this shifting variety of eventful changes, and to close this long and solemn procession of human great-

ness ? The truth which has now been unfolded, supplies the answer. A thousand years of blessedness and peace, a golden age of true holiness, has yet to appear ; and light and beauty will dawn upon our earth out of the troubled waves of sin, ambition, and crime. How cheering to turn from annals where nothing meets our view but wars and rumours of wars, crime and treachery, violence and bloodshed, to gaze on this refreshing prospect of peace and holiness ! The wilderness and the solitary place will then be glad, and the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose. The pure affections of the heart, long buried and crushed beneath the load of corruption, or stifled in the chilling atmosphere of the world, shall then spring forth in all their hidden beauty, and reveal themselves in ten thousand forms of happiness and peace. The energies of the soul, wasted no longer in the bloody strife of ambition, shall mount as the eagle toward heaven ; and all the sufferings of past ages seem unworthy to be compared with those immeasurable delights for which they have prepared the way.

Every part, indeed, of history will assume a new aspect, when it is connected with this joyful prospect of the millennium yet to appear. A Divine and wonderful unity begins to appear in its whole course ; and while the worldling gropes in darkness, the Christian sees the clear glimpses of God's supreme control and wise Providence, preparing the way, amidst clouds and tempest, for the blessedness that is to ensue. The dreams of infidel theorists are replaced by a hope, as far superior in excellence and glory, as the foundation on which it rests is more firm and solid, even the oath and covenant of the living God.

In this hope we may see also a corrective and safeguard against two opposite dangers, to which the Church is exposed. There are many who now dwell, with a wistful and idolatrous gaze, on earlier ages, and, while they deplore the divisions that infest the visible church, turn back in their hearts to the times of superstitious

gloom and twilight reverence. The hope of the millennium serves to expose and detect their sin and folly. Why should the Christian long for times of darkness, when an age of Divine light and glory is ready to burst upon his view? The counsels of God never turn backward, however it may be with the unbelieving hearts of His people. All is one progress, a sure, constant, and unfailing progress, towards the final triumph of truth and righteousness throughout the whole earth.

But there is an opposite danger, no less to be avoided, and perhaps even more perilous, from its closer resemblance to the truth. There are theories of progress in which God is forgotten, and proud reasonings of the perfectibility of mankind, in which the fall is never mentioned, and the redemption of Christ set at nought and despised. Much of the philosophy of these days belongs to this spurious and deceptive school. Untaught by all the crimes and miseries of the past generation, there are those who are still intent on building the happiness of the world, but, as they think, more cautiously and wisely, on the same basis which was then tried and found utterly wanting. There are those who will profess to explain the philosophy of history, without one allusion to the sure word of prophecy; and lay down the laws and maxims of national regeneration, without one allusion to the will of the Supreme Lawgiver, or that depth of corruption, which needs the blood of the Son of God to atone for its guilt, and the gift of the Holy Spirit to prevail over its stubbornness and root it out from the soul. Even Christians themselves may be infected with these ungodly theories. Without renouncing entirely the lessons of Scripture, they may pare down its doctrine into a seeming harmony with the hope of infidel theorists; while they refuse to own those solemn declarations of the judgments which precede the blessing, and rob the hope itself of those elements which are most clearly supernatural and Divine.

A firm belief in the millennium, as revealed in God's word, will serve to deliver us from this fatal delusion of

infidel minds. The progress of the world, without Divine grace, is downward, not upward; a journey to misery and ruin, not a pilgrimage to glory. If the nations are to be redeemed to a higher and holier state than they have ever yet attained, it is neither human science, nor the inventions of modern art and learning, to which the triumph must belong. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." A blessing so great and wonderful can never be drawn up from beneath by the boastful incantations and sorceries of human wisdom: it must descend from the throne of the Most High, in answer to the prayers of His believing people, and through the prevailing intercession of the Son of God.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE NEW HEAVENS AND EARTH.

The future fulfilment of the millennial kingdom is so generally allowed by devout Christians, that it was less needful to expand the train of argument by which it is proved. Of the six opinions already defined, the two first are thus rejected, and a main step is gained in our inquiry into the hopes of the Church. But the nature of those events which follow the millennium is more difficult to unfold. A general view of their broad outline seems, however, the best preparation for a clear decision on the other questions which still remain. The advocates both of a figurative and a personal millennium are here divided in their judgment. The most general opinion, perhaps, among the advocates of either view, supposes the last judgment to issue in the annihilation of the visible universe; when heaven with its blessed inhabitants, and hell with its miserable inmates, will alone remain and abide for ever. Some few there have been, who, by a still wider departure from the tone of Scripture, have supposed the earth itself to be converted into the place of final torment. But many have conceived that the earth, renewed and made glorious, will be the local and peculiar habitation of the risen saints for ever; and that the scene of the heavenly glory will be finally transferred to this planetary world. Perhaps it will be found that none of these views answers fully to the revealed statements of God's word. And since the subject is one of deep and eternal interest, and com-

paratively unexplored, it will be needful to search into it with caution and reverence, by a full examination of the evidence which the Scriptures supply.

The general inquiry is of this kind. What is the nature of that heavenly kingdom which ensues after the millennium and the last judgment? Is it simply an abode of the saints in the third heaven, the earth, and perhaps the whole visible creation, being destroyed? Or is it a transfer of heaven to the renewed earth, to be tenanted solely and for ever, by the saints of the resurrection? Or is it, finally, the union of a heavenly glory and an earthly blessedness—the glory of the saints who shall dwell in the city of God, and the blessedness of a ransomed universe, where holy generations shall for ever be training up to swell the numbers of the redeemed? To answer this inquiry, let us first examine the latest prophecy in the book of Revelation, and then trace the doctrine of Scripture, in regular order, from its beginning to its close.

I. The last vision of Revelation, chap. xxi. 9—xxii. 9; gives us a fuller account of this final state of the Church than is found elsewhere in the word of God. Our first aim will be to determine the time to which it refers, and the light which it throws on the nature of the glory to be then revealed.

Three views may be held of the time to which this vision refers. It may be explained as a prophecy of the millennial state alone; or as beginning with the millennium, but extending onwards into eternity; or finally, as beginning at the close of the millennium, and descriptive of the eternal kingdom then to ensue. The first of these opinions is disproved at once by the words, xxii. 5, where this state is plainly affirmed to be lasting and eternal. And even if there were not this explicit declaration, the whole scope of the vision would lead us to the same view. It would clearly be a maimed and incongruous exposition, to confine this last and crowning description of the blessedness of the Church

within the brief limit of one thousand years only. The natural impression which any simple mind must receive from the prophecy, closing as it does the whole canon of Scripture, is that it describes to us the final and everlasting glory of the people of God.

It is less needful to decide, in this present inquiry, whether the vision of the heavenly city commences at the beginning or at the close of the millennium. The following reasons appear, however, to establish the second view, that it begins after the millennium, and at the final judgment. The whole passage is only a more expanded form of the prediction, xxi. 2—5, where the descent of the heavenly city is briefly described. The question is simply, whether the former vision is here broken, and reverts to the time of chap. xix. 11, or whether it preserves its regular sequence.

Now if we examine that vision closely, no signs of an inverted order will appear. The great confederacy follows on the close of the millennium, and the sea, with its countless sand, appears to be still existing. Then the fire descends from heaven, and consumes the rebels. Next their deceiver is judged, and cast into the lake of fire. Then follows the general judgment, and the sea gives up the dead that are therein, and they are judged according to their works. Then the prophet beholds new heavens and a new earth, and there is *no more sea*. Thus far the connexion, at every step, is firm and invincible; and the sequence of the parts rests on the surest grounds. Then it is added, "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And he that sat on the throne said, Behold I make all things new."

Now, since these words occur in the same vision with the previous account of the judgment, an inversion of the direct order should not be supposed without some very strong reason. If we depart from this rule, the prophecies must be involved in endless uncertainty. Not one such instance, I believe, after full inquiry, can be found in the whole Apocalypse. But besides this general maxim, there seem here to be special reasons for viewing the parts of the vision as successive. The main feature of this prediction is the presence of *God himself*, without the need of a Mediator, with the children of men. This can only be when the Mediator has fulfilled his office, and when death, the last enemy, is destroyed. In full harmony with this view, it is when the prophet has just described the final extirpation of evil by the last judgment, that he speaks of the new heavens and earth, and then describes the descent of the holy city. The promise also "there shall be no more death" seems clearly to refer to that previous declaration, "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." All these marks concur to prove an unbroken succession, and that the descent, here announced, of the new Jerusalem, is to follow the completion of the last judgment.

One difficulty alone remains. The strong resemblance between the words, Rev. xix. 7—9, and xxi. 2, 9, has been regarded as a proof that the time must be the same in each instance. In each case, the bride seems to be made ready, and then to be revealed. But this reason, however specious, is not conclusive. The new Jerusalem must either denote a glorious mansion and abode of the Church, or else be a symbol to describe the Church itself. In the former view, the identity between the two statements disappears entirely. And even if the Church itself be denoted by that symbol, the events may still be different. For, in the former chapter, it is described under the figure of armed warriors; in the latter, as a city of holiness and peace. Two symbols so opposite may as naturally refer

to distinct and successive times, as the two reigns of David and Solomon. And if the angels of God are to be seen hereafter, ascending and descending upon the Son of Man ; there is no difficulty in conceiving that the saints, having been manifested as the warrior army of Christ, may again be more fully revealed from the invisible glory, in their blessed communion and fellowship as the city of peace and of love.

This wonderful vision, then, certainly includes a description of the eternal state ; and if the foregoing reasons be valid, relates to this only. Let us next examine what light the Holy Spirit has vouchsafed to us concerning the nature of this blessed kingdom, and the various elements of which it is composed.

The first character which pervades the whole is that of spiritual and heavenly glory. The new Jerusalem appears " out of heaven from God." The holy presence of God is fully manifested to His people. " God himself shall be with them, and be their God." The angels are seen to keep watch at the gates of the heavenly city. No created light is needed, " for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." These statements correspond to the highest conceptions we can frame even of the third heaven, and the immediate presence of Jehovah.

Still, the scene of this inexpressible glory is plainly in close connexion with the new earth. The mention of that new earth is the immediate preparation for the vision. It is from a high mountain, which must surely be on that earth, that St. John beholds the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem. Three times the holy city is declared, in express terms, to come down *out of* heaven, *from* God. It is the kings of the earth who bring their honour and glory into it, and the leaves of the tree of life, which grow therein, are for the healing of the nations. Why indeed should the new earth have been revealed to the prophet here, unless to mark its connexion with this unveiling of the Divine glory ? The whole vision yields naturally this view and no other.—

heaven and all its brightness revealed as the true metropolis of the ransomed earth.

We may now advance a step further. The risen saints plainly compose the heavenly city, or at least, are the happy dwellers therein. But do these form the whole of this magnificent landscape of joy! There are several indications which lead to an opposite conclusion. First, the very title, the bride, the Lamb's wife, naturally implies that other parties are also present to the scene. Again, it is declared that "the nations shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it." Now since the holy city bears the name "the new Jerusalem," the first clause of itself must imply others who are distinct from its citizens; and who walk in the light which beams forth from that city of God. But the other clause is still less obscure. The kings of the earth, who bring their glory and honour into it, seem clearly to describe those who are dwelling, not in the city itself, but on the new earth; and who, as the tribes of old went up to the earthly Jerusalem, present all their honour and greatness as offerings to illustrate its superior glory.

The prophet adds further, that the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; "for there shall be no night there." This must surely refer to some who are not dwellers in the city, but for whom a free access is thus provided. And that such is the true purpose of the declaration will appear more plainly from Isaiah lx. 11, another prophecy which bears a close analogy to the one before us. As if to impress the same truth more deeply, it is repeated again in the following verse, "And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it." The nations here mentioned are evidently distinct from the bride of the Lamb, or from the mystical city within whose gates they will bring their glory and honour.

The same lesson is taught further (xxii. 2.) in the description of the tree of life. "The leaves of the tree

are for the healing of the nations." These, again, cannot be the dwellers in the city, but must be others dwelling on the new earth, for which this provision of grace is made. And we learn the same mysterious truth from the last words of the whole description, where it is said of the celestial inhabitants of the new Jerusalem—they shall reign for ever and ever. A *reign* clearly implies subjects, over whom authority and dominion are exercised. And thus the last sounds on the harp of prophecy confirm the great doctrine which has been taught in so many previous statements of the sacred vision.

The result of this examination is of deep interest and importance. The latest, fullest, and clearest description, which the scriptures reveal to us of the heavenly glory, and of the eternal kingdom of God, does not exclude, but on the contrary, distinctly implies, the existence also of a renewed earth, and of nations dwelling thereon ; who walk in the light of the new Jerusalem, and bring to the holy city the constant tribute of their honour and glory.

The way is thus prepared for a wider and more general inquiry. The impression has doubtless prevailed extensively in the church, that the whole issue of the redemption of Christ is summed up and comprised in the resurrection and translation of the saints at the second coming of the Lord. The last and fullest account of the final blessedness leads us, as we have seen, to a wider range of hope. Let us now trace the testimony of God's word from the beginning, and see whether it does not confirm this larger hope, and unfold to us a growing triumph of redemption through eternal ages.

II. The object of inquiry may be thus defined. Does the word of God distinctly reveal to us a time when the number of mankind shall be complete, and a close be put for ever to the course of human generations? Or does it unfold the prospect of successive generations of the redeemed, throughout the course of the ages to come?

It has appeared already that the latest prophecy of scripture encourages, rather than forbids, the latter view. Our object is now, by a regular induction from scripture alone, to determine the true nature of that testimony which it affords.

The history of the Creation is the first passage which bears on this subject. The divine command was then given, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." Three conclusions may be drawn from this statement. First, the nature of men, unlike that of angels, contained in it a full provision for an evergrowing exhibition of Divine goodness. Secondly, no limit is here assigned to the actual increase of the numbers of mankind. And thirdly, the very law of the Divine goodness, as here revealed, is that God takes delight in the multiplied happiness of his creatures, through successive generations.

It is true that the Fall introduced a mighty change into this first state of mankind, and interposed a dark cloud before the brightness of Divine love. But since the purpose of redemption is to undo, and more than undo, what sin hath done, there is no need to suppose the final issue of that redemption more narrow and confined in its sphere than is implied in the first ordinance of creating wisdom.

The history of the Fall, and the sentence on Adam and Eve, throws a further light on this inquiry. Pain, sorrow, and death, are there announced as the bitter fruits of sin. But there is no hint of a future suspense or reversal of the first appointment of creation, which provided for the continual increase of mankind. On the contrary, even in the midst of sorrow, the multiplied and multiplying numbers of the human race are the objects of a distinct promise. The original purpose of God's love seems thus to remain unaltered amidst the darkest clouds of guilt and rebellion.

The promise to Noah is still more distinct and full After the whole world had sunk in rebellion, and perished in its sin, the persevering bounty of God re-

ceives a most signal display in the renewed covenant. The words in which it is couched are most remarkable.

"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. . . . And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply, bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein." . . . . "And God spake unto Noah and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold I establish my covenant with you and with your seed after you. . . . And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, *for perpetual generations*. . . . And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth."

Two expressions are here used to describe this covenant. It is everlasting, and it is for perpetual generations. The impression which these words convey, when combined with that divine command which precedes them, is very clear. They seem plainly to imply that no limit was assigned to those generations, which are here declared to be perpetual, and which should for ever witness the truth and faithfulness of God. This covenant of Noah, it may be further remarked, is employed by the Spirit of God, in Isaiah liv. 7. as the very pattern of an unchangeable and enduring promise.

The covenant with Abraham seems to yield a further illustration of this deep and mysterious subject. The following passages especially, call for our most careful attention.

Gen. xiii. 15, 16. "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered."

xv. 5. "And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be."

xvii. 2. "And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. . . . And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall spring from thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and thy seed after thee, the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession."

xvii. 19. "Thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."

xxii. 17. "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed, as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore."

These promises of God to Abraham contain no hint of a limit to the future generations of mankind. But their evidence appears to go further still. The covenant to the sons of Abraham, in their generations, is everlasting; and it is added, with a redoubled emphasis, "My covenant shall be in their flesh for an everlasting covenant." Up to this point there is nothing in the statements of Scripture, from which there could be inferred any limit or close to the successive course of human generations.

It is needless to adduce other passages of the same kind from the books of Moses, where several occur. One only may be noticed, from the peculiar importance of the place which it occupies. In the second commandment we find these words: "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth, to them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands, in them that love me and keep my commandments."

Here, in the former clause, the supplement to be added is quite plain. The meaning is, unto the third and fourth *generation*. Now the parallel between the clauses, and the evident climax in the thought, requires the same supplement in the latter part of the command,

unto thousands of generations. But, on the other hand, less than two hundred generations would fill the whole history of mankind, from Adam our first parent to the close of the millennium. The promise implies, then, a far longer continuance of the human race.

Let us now pass on to the times of David, and the testimony of the book of Psalms. And here, first of all, the promise meets us which was given to that servant of God, when he proposed to build the house of the Lord. 2 Sam. vii. Let any one read the chapter with simple mind, and he will see how entirely it is in harmony with the view already proposed. The house and the kingdom of David are declared repeatedly to be established for ever before God. And this is combined also with the national choice of Israel. "For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel, to be a people unto thee for ever." Nor is there one hint that this national separation was to cease, and the house and kingdom of David to be transferred to an invisible world, and be continued merely in figure. The whole aspect of the prophecy looks directly to a blessed futurity upon the earth.

6. In the Psalms themselves the same aspect of hope appears continually. Thus in Psalm x. 16, it is said, "The Lord is king for ever and ever; the heathen are perished out of His land." The natural inference would be, from these words, that the perpetual dominion of the Lord was linked with perpetual righteousness in the land of Israel. In Psalm xxxvii. the lesson is taught still more plainly. The whole course of the Psalm is one contrast between the wicked who are consumed out of the earth, and the righteous who abide in it for ever. In Psalm xlv., which is clearly a description of the glorious kingdom of Messiah, a promise of the same import is found. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all lands." These words, though from the metaphor involved they are not a direct proof, seem to imply the increasing and growing number of the people of God. The seventy-

second Psalm is more explicit. It describes to us a glorious kingdom of Messiah, and seems to intimate very strongly its lasting nature and perpetual continuance upon earth. "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations." "His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." In Psalm lxxxvii, xcvi, xcviii, cii, and several others, the same view of the continuance of the earth and its generations frequently appears.

Another very distinct testimony occurs in Psalm cv. 8. The oath to Abraham is there styled, "The word which he commanded to a thousand generations." But the time thus revealed exceeds, in a fourfold measure, the whole number of human generations even till the close of the millennial kingdom. And, therefore, by the direct and plain testimony of the Holy Spirit, it carries us far onward into the generations of the world to come. So, in like manner, that Zion where David fixed the site of the temple receives the promise, Psalm cxxxii. 13, 14, "For the Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest *for ever;* here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

It is needless, perhaps, to dwell at length on each separate passage in the prophets, where the same doctrine seems to be revealed. The following are some of the texts, where it appears to be the most plainly declared.

Prov. ii. 21, 22. "For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it."

Prov. xi. 31. "Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner."

Isaiah ix. 6, 7. "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the *increase* of his government and peace there shall be *no end;* upon the

throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth *even for ever*. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."

Isaiah xxxii. 16—18. "Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceful habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places; when it shall hail, coming down on the forest, and the city shall be abased in a low place."

xxxiii. 20. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall *ever* be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."

xxxv. 10. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

xlv. 12, 13. "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an *everlasting* sign, that shall not be cut off."

lix. 21. "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of *thy seed*, nor out of the mouth of *thy seed's seed*, saith the Lord, *from henceforth and for ever*."

lx. 15. "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an *eternal* excellency, a joy of *many generations*."

lx. 20—22. "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be

thine *everlasting* light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land *for ever*, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. *A little one* shall *become a thousand*, and a small one a nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time."

lxi. 7—9. "Therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them. For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an *everlasting* covenant with them. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed."

lxii. 4. "Thou shalt *no more* be termed Forsaken, neither shall *thy land* any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and *thy land shall be married*."

lxv. 9. "And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there."

lxv. 17—23. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for *ever* in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. . . . And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. . . . They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they are the *seed of the blessed of the Lord* and *their offspring with them*."

lxvi. 22. "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make *shall remain before me*, saith the Lord, so shall *your seed* and *your name* remain."

Jer. xxxi. 35—40. "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divid-

eth the sea when the waves thereof roar ; The Lord of hosts is his name : If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord ; if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. . . . It shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down *any more for ever*."

xxxiii. 20—22. " Thus saith the Lord ; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season ; Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne ; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured : so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me."

Ezek. xvi. 60, 61. " Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an *everlasting covenant*. Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger : and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant."

xxxvii. 25—28. " And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt ; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and *their children's children for ever :* and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them ; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them ; and I will place them, and *multiply them*, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for *evermore*. My tabernacle also shall be with them : yea, I

will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them *for evermore*."

xxxix. 22, 28, 29. "So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God, from that day and forward. . . . Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen; but I have gathered them into their own land, and left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them, for I have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel, saith the Lord."

xliii. 7, 9. "Now let them put away their whoredom and the carcases of their kings far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them *for ever*.

xlviii. 35. "It was round about, eighteen thousand measures; and the name of the city from that day shall be, THE LORD IS THERE."

Joel iii. 20, 21. "Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed; for the Lord dwelleth in Zion."

Amos ix. 15. "And I will plant them upon their land; and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God."

Micah iv. 7. "And I will make her that halteth a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth even for ever."

In most of these passages, taken in their unforced and natural meaning, three ideas are combined; an abode upon earth, successive generations, and a perpetual continuance. The testimony, therefore, of the law and the prophets, uniformly tends to one and the same conclusion. No one could infer, from these parts of the inspired volume, that there was any final bound assigned to the course of human generations. The direct statements of their perpetual continuance are so numerous,

and expressed in such various forms, that nothing less than the clearest evidence in other parts of revelation can warrant us in restricting them to a narrower sense. The Jewish church, up to the time of our Lord, seems always to have taken them in their simple meaning. The resurrection of the patriarchs and the reign of Messiah introduced, in their view, a perpetual kingdom of peace and happiness upon earth.

Let us now turn to the scriptures of the New Testament. In these an opposite aspect of divine truth is unfolded. They reveal the depth and height, rather than the breadth of divine love; and dwell not so much on the final extension of Christ's kingdom, as on the vastness of that celestial glory to which he will exalt his people. Yet still there are notices of the same truth, though less frequent, which link together these two aspects of redemption into harmonious and consistent union.

And first, in the message to the Virgin, the angel Gabriel delivers this comprehensive prophecy. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

The throne of David was doubtless a throne upon earth. The house of Jacob is also a term which describes the people of Israel as a nation. And over this house the angel declares to us that Messiah, on the throne of David, will reign for ever. The only natural construction of these words is that which refers them to holy generations upon earth, in an eternal kingdom of glory.

In the close of the same gospel, the promise of our Lord to his apostles conveys a similar truth. "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me: That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Let us compare this promise

with the words of Gabriel to the Virgin, and the resemblance will be plain. The judicial power assigned to the apostles over the tribes of Israel, on thrones, corresponds with the reign of Christ over the house of Jacob, and on the throne of David. The natural interpretation is to refer the promise to an eternal government, of which the house of Israel are the objects, and the new earth the appointed scene. The same declaration had been already made on a previous occasion, Matt. xix. 28. and is referred expressly to "the regeneration," or the times of restitution of all things, when He who sitteth on the throne shall say, "Behold, I make all things new."

The sermon of St. Peter, Acts iii. 19—26, bears naturally the same construction. The restitution of all things, connected with the allusion to all the prophets, seems directly to remind us of those testimonies which have been already adduced, and to point our thoughts onward to an eternal redemption of the earth to the service and glory of God. For "He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited." "The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever; the Lord shall rejoice in his works."

The passage, Rom. viii. 17—22, has the same character. A glory and redemption of the creation itself, distinct from that of the risen saints, is plainly revealed. It is less natural to confine this to inanimate and irrational creatures, than to suppose it inclusive of the whole frame and order of this lower world, as it first appeared from the creative hand of God. And this is exactly the same view to which we are led by all the foregoing predictions.

The epistle to the Ephesians, while it dwells with peculiar fulness on the spiritual glory of the gospel, contains two allusions to the same doctrine. Thus it is said of our Lord, Eph. i. 22. "God has put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Here the church of Christ are

viewed as united with Him in rule and dominion over a subject universe. This does not accord in the least with a total destruction of the visible world, but receives the fullest significance and depth of meaning by the view which has been now unfolded of the eternal kingdom.

Again, in chap. iii. 20, 21. we meet with this remarkable prayer, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ, *unto all the generations of the age of ages.* Amen." The literal force of this expression can only be preserved by the view already given of successive generations in that eternal kingdom. And by this exposition the prayer itself receives an amplitude and fulness, which is otherwise lost or greatly obscured. An immeasurable vista of progressive happiness and grandeur is thus unfolded, in which the church of the first-born shall be for ever rejoicing in an unequalled and eternal weight of glory.

The words of St. James, i. 18. imply the same truth. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." The title given to the saints of God, as "the church of the first-born," illustrates the phrase. And both, when compared together, suggest the notion of further and wider accessions to the family of the redeemed, when the first-fruits shall have been gathered in, and the number of the first-born be complete. There are other passages of the New Testament which point to the same hope, but which would require a more full examination to unfold them.

The latest prophecy, which closes the book of Revelation, has been reviewed before; and gives many strong confirmations of this view. And thus from the full and oft-repeated statements of the Old Testament, no where rescinded, but several times confirmed, more or less clearly, in the New, we seem led to the conclusion that the eternal kingdom of Christ, with its heavenly glory, includes also an earthly and ever-growing blessedness.

As the new heavens and earth shall remain, so shall the seed and the name of Israel remain also. The covenant with Abraham is unto a thousand generations; nay, unto all the countless "generations of the age of ages."

But it is time to consider the difficulties which may be urged against such a view, and which have hindered it from being generally recognized in the Christian Church. The main hindrance to its reception, perhaps, has been the slowness with which man can receive or apprehend the vastness of the Divine counsels of love. The height of glory, revealed for the first time in the Gospel, was so unspeakable,—the resurrection and eternal life with Christ were hopes so glorious,—that in this fresh aspect of the infinite height of God's love, the length and breadth, which had been previously revealed, were first obscured, and then forgotten. But this is no reason why, in the eventide of the Church, the harmony of both these truths may not be restored; and the blessedness of redeemed generations for ever be seen and acknowledged in harmony with the surpassing glory of the Church of the first-born.

The two chief objections which suggest themselves to the previous view, are the conflagration, and the general resurrection. Let us consider them in order.

The conflagration, described by St. Peter, has often been supposed to predict an utter annihilation of our planetary world. And even when this extreme view has been abandoned, the language of the Apostle has been thought to imply the total destruction of all life, except the incorruptible life of the resurrection. It has been judged impossible that a race of living men, supposing this otherwise consistent with God's word, could survive through a scene so awful and a destruction so entire, even though a new earth is to spring out of the ashes of the old.

This objection, doubtless, at the first view, has considerable weight. Yet a closer inquiry will, I think, remove it, and show that the apparent is not a real contradiction. And first, that annihilation is not here

designed, is clear both from the parallel with the world before the flood, and from the mention of the new earth which immediately follows. It is also refuted by countless other passages of Scripture, and by the closing vision of the Apocalypse, where the holy city descends from heaven, and the kings of the earth bring their honour into it. This opinion may therefore be rejected as entirely baseless and untrue.

Let us next inquire whether the solemn change here described is such as to exclude the continuance of living men amidst those convulsions. Now here, first, the parallel which St. Peter himself supplies, comes to our aid. "The heavens and earth," before the flood, "being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire." This parallel must not be lightly passed by. In each case the destruction, in a popular sense, was total and entire. Yet in the days of Noah, "a few, namely eight souls, were saved through the water." It was a special, and even a miraculous deliverance: but they were yet preserved to be the founders of a new race of mankind. The second destruction corresponds to the former, and is by fire. Yet this is no reason why a remnant may not in like manner be spared through the judgment. The control of God over both elements is alike sovereign and complete. He who parted the sea when the waves roared, to make a way for the ransomed to pass over, in like manner quenched the violence of the fire, when the three children walked loose in the midst of the furnace, and a fourth was with them, "and the form of the fourth was like unto the Son of God." The parallel then, which the Apostle himself supplies, yields us a stronger warrant for expecting such a preservation, than his vivid description of the solemn change can afford for pronouncing it impossible.

But we seem not to have been left to this indirect argument. There is a promise which appears to relate immediately and properly to this deliverance. In Isaiah li.

the passing away of the old heavens and earth for the establishment of the new is clearly described. Now, in connexion with the change, the following words are addressed to Israel. "I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared : the Lord of Hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and *I have covered thee with the shadow of mine hand*, that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundation of the earth ; and say unto Zion, Thou art my people."

Here, at the very time when the old heavens and earth pass away, and the new heavens and earth are established, the people of Zion are covered in the shadow of God's hand. And this deliverance from the fire is compared to the deliverance, in the first Exodus of Israel, from the overwhelming waves of the sea.

If now we turn to the book of Revelation, the same truth appears more plainly. The last fire is there seen to fall on the rebels who compass the beloved city. But the camp of the saints itself is preserved ; the fire harms it not. The dead then, and the dead only, so far as that prophecy reveals, are summoned in judgment, but the faithful who are then living are passed by in silence ; and the natural conclusion seems to be, that from them the new earth is peopled with holy and righteous generations.

A further difficulty arises from the doctrine of the general resurrection. If all the dead are raised and all the living changed at the same instant of time, there is no room left for any future race of mankind upon earth. For those who partake of the resurrection, and those who are changed, in like manner, neither marry nor are given in marriage. A final limit would thus be clearly assigned to the course of human generations.

To meet this objection fully, it would be needful to anticipate the inquiry of the next chapter concerning the time and order of the resurrection. It is enough simply to remark that the doctrine on which the objection rests is nowhere affirmed in Scripture, but rather

the reverse. It is, indeed, everywhere announced to us that all the dead must be raised, and appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. It is also declared that immediately after the resurrection of those who sleep in Jesus, all the saints who are then alive will be changed suddenly and caught up to meet the Lord. But we are nowhere taught, in express terms, that all the dead, the righteous and the wicked, shall be raised at the same moment. Nay, we have a clear testimony that the reverse is true. "The rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished." Once let these words be accepted in their natural meaning, and the whole objection disappears. All the saints who are alive at the first resurrection may be changed together, and enter into glory. And yet there may be others spared upon earth, and brought to repentance amidst terrible judgments, who shall abide unchanged when the wicked are raised at the last, and shall become, in the deep counsels of Divine wisdom, the forefathers of those nations who are to walk in the light of the new Jerusalem—the patriarchs of the new earth where righteousness shall dwell for ever.

Such then appears to be the consenting testimony of the word of God. Even after the millennium, and the final act of judgment, the earth is not to be utterly abolished or destroyed. There are new heavens to succeed, and a new earth, the perpetual abode of righteousness. There happy and holy generations shall dwell, who shall walk in the light of the heavenly city, exempt from death, and perhaps translated in succession to a higher and celestial glory. The prospect may well dazzle and overwhelm us with its unutterable vastness. But surely it is a view which serves to magnify the riches of Divine power and grace; and nothing can be too vast for the wisdom of God to design, or for the love of God to bestow. "He that spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" When we catch the distant glimpse of this land of promise, how should

our hearts echo the words of the holy Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him; and recompense shall be made him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE TIME OF THE SECOND ADVENT.

In the previous chapters it has been shewn, by clear and full evidence of Scripture, that there is a time, still future, of holy blessedness to the Church of God here below. Whether we confine this hope to the period of the millennium only, or extend it, which is the juster view, to the ages that will follow, in either case the general doctrine continues firm and unshaken. The lips of prophets and apostles, from the beginning, have assured us of its truth. They announce, with one consent, a time of restitution of all things, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas."

An inquiry of deep interest still remains; and one which involves great and important lessons to the whole world. Is the coming of our Lord, that great hope of the Church, to introduce this time of blessedness, or only to follow, after an interval of at least a thousand years? On this important question the views of pious Christians differ widely at the present hour. And yet we shall find, I am persuaded, on examination, that the evidence of Scripture is clear, decisive, and full; and points, in every part alike, to the same conclusion.

There are two remarks, however, which appear necessary, to clear the way for this important inquiry. And first, it is a question totally distinct from all reasonings or conjectures as to the precise date of the Lord's advent. That day and that hour may remain, even to

the last, partially concealed; though doubtless increasing light will be given to the Church, in proportion as the end is drawing near. But the light may never, perhaps, be so full as to enable Christians to assign the year or the day, until the very eve of our Saviour's return. The inquiry relates simply to the place of the advent in the wide outline of God's dispensations. Are a thousand years, or are they not, certainly to intervene before the Son of Man is revealed from heaven? This is clearly a lawful subject for earnest inquiry. It seems the bounden duty of every Christian, since he is commanded to be waiting for his Lord, to search whether the Scriptures have anywhere revealed to us so long a period of delay. Till this great question is decided, we cannot interpret aright, and therefore cannot rightly obey, an oft-repeated commandment of the word of God.

Again, the form in which the question is often stated is the following. Will the Second Advent be pre-millennial or post-millennial? But since the millennium, as such, is mentioned in one passage only, it seems desirable to express the alternative in a more general form. Let us assume only, as an admitted truth, that, whether for a short or long period, there is a future time of blessedness here on earth, the subject of repeated promises in Holy Scripture. Is the Advent of our Lord to introduce this time of blessedness; or to follow long after it has begun? Such is the real nature of the alternative; and it remains for us to examine the evidence which the word of God, almost in every part, supplies for its decision.

I. First, let us consider the passage itself where the Millennium is expressly revealed. Rev. xix, xx. The future blessedness of the Church is there set before us with greater chronological distinctness than in any other place. And where, in the context of this vision, do we find the advent of our Lord introduced? The answer to the inquiry is very plain. A full and dis-

tinct narrative of the Lord's appearing from heaven is detailed by the prophet, just *before* the millennium, and forms its immediate introduction. On the other hand, *after* the millennium there is not found one syllable in the prophecy expressive of such an advent. The testimony of this fundamental vision is decisive and complete.

It may be affirmed, no doubt, that the Advent in chapter xix. is figurative only, and that a real advent occurs after the millennium, when Satan has been loosed, and the fire descends from heaven. But the stubborn fact remains unaltered, that the vision expressly reveals an advent in the former place, and in the latter passes it by in silence. To maintain the theory, we have to commit a double violence. We have to explain away the advent where it appears openly, and in plain terms, in the prophecy; and we have to introduce it, where the Holy Spirit gives no token of its occurrence. It is difficult to see how any interpretation could be censured, with more justice, as both adding to, and taking away from the words of the prophecy.

Let any Christian read the two chapters in question, laying aside every previous notion, and with a simple desire to hear the voice of God's Spirit, and I see not how he can escape from the evident conclusion. The Second Advent of our Lord, as described in the latest prophecy of Scripture, does not *follow*, but *precedes*, the millennial kingdom.

II. A second argument, of great force, may be drawn from the silence of the New Testament. Probably more than a hundred passages occur, where the return of our Lord is held out to the eye of faith, as the great object of expectation to the church of God. And yet in no single passage do we find any intimation that a thousand years of joy and blessedness were to intervene. Is such a silence credible, if the millennium were in reality to precede the Advent? On the other hand, if the Advent be pre-millennial, the silence on this point will be

simply and easily explained. The hope of the millennium will then be included, as a part within the whole, in the expectation of the Advent itself, and of that glorious kingdom of our Lord which is afterwards to ensue.

Indeed the whole character and tone of the promises which relate to the Second Advent is entirely opposed to the existence of any such interval of earthly blessedness. Their uniform announcement is, trial and affliction until the Lord shall appear ; and then, deliverance, glory, and honour, to all His true servants.

III. The descriptions which are given us of the state of the true Church, until the Saviour returns, are another powerful argument for the same view. It is described as a little flock, and a remnant according to the election of grace. The gate is strait, and the way is narrow, that leads unto life. Through much tribulation the followers of Christ have to enter into the kingdom of God. The rest of the Church from trouble is only "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed with His mighty angels." The age in which they live is called "the present evil age," one from which Christ has died to deliver them. Their privileges, in "the present time," are joined with "persecutions." And in several places the heaviest afflictions seem to be announced at the last, before the coming of the Lord.

Now, if all the glory and peace of the Church follow on the return of the Lord, these various declarations are clear and consistent. No force requires then to be put upon them, to reconcile them with the millennial hope of the Church. On the opposite supposition a large part of the New Testament must be superseded, and be no longer applicable to the experience of the Church, long before the dispensation of grace has been closed by the appearing of the Lord.

IV. Let us now consider, more in detail, the passages in the Gospels which refer to the same subject. Every hint which these furnish will be found to point, uni-

formly, to the same conclusion. None of them imply, and several appear to exclude, a millennium of rest to the Church before the return of the Saviour.

1. In the sermon on the Mount, we have one of the first allusions to the day of Christ. (Matt. vii. 21, 22.) And it is instructive to observe the truths with which it is most nearly connected. It is prefaced by our Lord's declaration that the way of life is strait and narrow, and by a solemn warning against false prophets. So far as the context warrants any inference, it shuts out the prospect of general holiness, or any triumphant extirpation of false doctrine, until that day of Christ shall appear.

2. Our Lord's address to his apostles, on their first mission, yields a still more explicit testimony to the same truth. There we meet with a remarkable statement. "When they persecute you in this city, flee into another; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have finished (ου μη τελεσητε) the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." (Matt. x. 23.)

The exact meaning of these words has been the subject of much debate. It is clear, however, from the context, that they are prospective, and relate to the persecution of the apostles after our Lord's Ascension. The Advent referred to must therefore be the Second Advent in glory. The expression, to "*finish* or *complete* the cities of Israel," must be explained, naturally, with respect to the great object of the apostolic commission, which was the saving conversion of unbelieving sinners. The words are therefore a prophecy, that the conversion of all the cities of Israel to the faith of Christ will not occur until the Son of Man be come. They furnish, thus, a plain disproof of a millennial blessedness before the Advent; and harmonize with many others, where the conversion of Israel is connected with the visible re-appearance of our Lord.

3. The parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. xiii. 24—30, 36—42) leads us clearly to the same view. The intermixture continues unbroken and undisturbed, till

the "end of the age," when the angels came forth as the reapers. There is no intimation that the corn-field of the Church will be cleansed or purified long before the separation in judgment.

4. The promise of our Lord to his apostles (Matt. xix. 28) points, not obscurely, to the same truth. A *regeneration*, or time of renovation to the world, is there predicted. But this will not be fulfilled, until our Lord himself shall sit upon the throne of his glory. There is no room, therefore, left for a millennium or regeneration of the world, before his appearing.

5. The prophecy on the Mount of Olives (Matt. xxiv.) bears with equal plainness on the same inquiry. Comparing the words in St. Luke, we see that the course of events is continued, through the times of the Gentiles, down to the troubles of the last days, and a tribulation which is immediately followed by the coming of the Lord. There is no room whatever left in the prophecy for a long millennium of peace and rest to intervene. Jerusalem does not cease to be trodden down till the signs appear in the firmament, which announce the presence of the Son of Man. The same remarks apply to the prophecy as it occurs in all the three first evangelists. In each of them, the times of affliction are described to us as immediately followed by the Lord's advent.

6. The instructions to the Church, in St. Luke (xii. 31—46), import evidently the same truth. The followers of Christ are there described as a little flock, even till their Lord returns. They are exhorted to be in that continual readiness for his coming, which is inconsistent with the knowledge that a thousand years would intervene. The bare impression of a certain and long delay is treated as at once a cause and an effect of apostasy. The whole passage shuts out the expectation of universal holiness, to last for a long period before the Lord shall come.

7. The words of Christ to the Pharisees and the disciples (Luke xvii. 20—28) are of similar import. Two events only are specified, out of those which precede

the Advent—the sufferings and rejection of Christ among the Jews ; and a time, like that before the flood of Noah, of prevailing ungodliness in the world. The whole tenor of our Saviour's warning forbids us to introduce an event so entirely contrasted in its nature as a thousand years of spiritual prosperity.

8. The parable of our Lord (Luke xix. 11—24) on his last approach to Jerusalem, is even still more distinct and clear. It was spoken with the express design of clearing away false impressions from the minds of his followers. Yet it teaches us, in plain terms, that the hatred of the citizens will continue until the King returns and enters openly on his dominion. No interval of rest and holiness for a thousand years can here be inserted without entirely reversing the impression of the whole.

9. The parting words of Christ concerning St. John, the beloved disciple (John xxi. 22), are perhaps too obscure to form a basis of distinct argument. Yet, indirectly, they seem to furnish a confirmation of the previous remarks. Whatever their precise import, one thing is clear, that our Lord, when he uttered them, designed to keep alive the expectation of his own speedy return till the very close of that apostle's lifetime. But to suppose that the millennium, revealed so plainly to St. John in the Apocalypse, was before the Advent, would completely reverse and destroy the former lesson. And, in strict accordance with this remark, for many centuries after the Apocalypse was given such an exposition of the millennial vision appears never once to have been proposed.

Thus every passage which bears on the subject in the Gospels leads naturally to the same conclusion, and forbids us to look for the promised millennium of peace, till He, who is the Prince of Peace, shall himself return to establish his own kingdom.

V. In the Acts of the Apostles, beside other intimations of a more obscure and distant kind, there is one

passage which bears directly on this inquiry, and which demands an exact and careful review. This is the address of St. Peter to the Jews, after healing the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple (Acts iii. 19). The words of the sacred text, in the most literal and exact version, are as follows:—

"Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, that there may come times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus Christ, which before hath been slain by you: Whom the heaven must receive until times of restitution of all things, of which (times) God hath spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began."

Two things appear evidently from this inspired statement. First, that the national conversion of Israel is linked, by Divine promise, with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. And next, that the same return of our Lord will introduce the period, foretold by all the prophets, of the restitution of all things. These two statements agree with each other, and with the conclusions already derived from other parts of Scripture.

But here a critical objection has been raised. The word *restitution*, it is urged, may be rendered, *accomplishment* or *fulfilment*, and the relative cannot refer to the restitution itself, but must relate to the word *all things*, which is the immediate antecedent. (ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων ὧν ἐλάλησεν ὁ Θεός.)

Now it is true that the term itself (αποκαταστασις) might be explained by *accomplishment*, in the sense of a *filling up*, or *completion*. But it is equally clear that it does not bear the sense of a *close* or *termination*. Neither usage nor derivation allows us to ascribe to it the latter meaning; and hence the proposed variation, in the only sense allowable, leaves the scope of the passage quite unaltered.

But in truth the most exact and precise version of the Greek term is, *restoration* or *restitution*. This will be clear when we compare all the passages where the

verb from which it is derived occurs. (Matt. xii. 13; xvii. 11. Mark iii. 5; viii. 25; ix. 12. Luke vi. 10. Acts i. 6. Heb. xiii. 19.) In all of these the meaning is evidently, to replace a person or thing, after some defect or loss, in its proper integrity and completeness. Such, therefore, beyond all reasonable doubt, is its real significance here also.

Again, the relative may, in point of grammar merely, be referred either to the times, (*χρόνων*) or to the word *all things*, (*πάντων*). But the sense forbids the latter construction. For in this case the relative clause would not be explanatory, nor form a distinct assertion, but would define and limit what things were to be restored. Now the meaning which results from this rendering is plainly untrue; for all things of which the prophets have spoken from the beginning neither will nor can be restored. The clause, then, must be referred, for its antecedent, to the times of restitution, and the resulting sense will be simple and free from perplexity. Those times, we are here taught, have been one main subject of prediction to all the prophets of God from the earliest age.

The conclusion to be drawn from these words of St. Peter is now evident. Since the return of our Lord is to follow at once on the national repentance of Israel, and is also to usher in the times of the promised restitution, the millennium cannot precede, but must follow His appearing.

VI. The Epistles furnish us with copious evidence of the same truth. Let us begin with those to the Thessalonians, as probably the earliest in order of time.

In the former of these epistles, every chapter ends with a direct reference to the coming of our Lord. It is set before the church as the great and continual object of earnest hope and joyful expectation. Yet not a single word is to be found in the whole, from which it could be suspected that a long season of peace and happiness was to intervene. The whole tenor of the

Apostle's exhortations entirely precludes the supposition that such a hope as that of the millennium was present to his view, before the coming of the Lord.

Two replies may be attempted to this weighty argument. It may be alleged, first, that the millennium was not yet clearly revealed, even to the apostles ; and next, that on any supposition eighteen centuries were to intervene, of which no hint is given in the epistle. But these remarks do not meet the real difficulty. For the long delay in times of trouble and apostasy, was not revealed to the apostles, and the numbers which announced it were expressly sealed. But though the millennium was not yet revealed in its precise length and minuter features, the fact of a blessed restitution, to continue for many generations at least, was expressly foretold in countless passages, and the apostles neither were nor could be ignorant of the truth. Unless that restitution had been understood to follow the return of our Lord, it seems quite incredible that St. Paul should here have passed it by in a total silence.

But the second epistle yields a still more decisive, and indeed an invincible argument for the same truth. The declarations of St. Paul concerning the nearness of the advent had been misunderstood. He writes a second letter with the express design of unfolding the doctrine to the Thessalonians more clearly. He states very plainly that there was still to intervene a period of growing apostasy, undetermined in its length. But, far from revealing a further delay in a thousand years of millennial blessedness, he asserts the very contrary in the plainest terms. The close of the apostacy is to be marked and defined only by the personal appearing of the Lord Jesus. " And then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming." No words could be more destructive to the hypothesis of a millennium to intervene before the coming of the Lord. The same truth appears also from the previous chapter. For there the afflictions of the Church are

declared to last until the Advent. Then, and not till then, shall affliction be changed for rest, happiness, and joy.

To cut this knot, and reconcile the words of St. Paul with the modern hypothesis which places a still future millennium before the advent, it has been suggested that a figurative, not a personal coming, is here designed. But to refute this notion it is enough to read the epistle carefully from beginning to end. It is clear that the apostle throughout speaks of one and the same Advent, when the troubled and afflicted saints shall find rest, (i. 7.) when their enemies shall be visited with fiery judgment, (i. 8.) when the people of Christ shall be gathered into his presence, (ii. 1.) when Antichrist shall be destroyed, (ii. 8.) and the day of Christ manifestly have dawned in the brightness of the Lord's appearing, (ii. 2, 3, 8.) If this conclusion be denied, it is hard to see how any doctrine whatever can be certainly gathered from any part of the word of God.

Let us now turn, as next in order, to the first Epistle to the Corinthians. And here, besides the closing chapter, there are several scattered texts which, if not conclusive in themselves, all however point in the same direction. The Corinthians (i. 6.) were waiting, not for a millennium of peace, but for the coming of the Lord, as the one great and immediate object of desire and expectation. They came behind in no gift of knowledge, and yet were clearly quite ignorant of any such period of triumph to intervene. Again we are told that "on us the ends of the world are come," (x. 11.) a description which at least is far less emphatic, if the advent be removed to the further distance of a thousand years. The state of the Church is described by five stages, apparently successive, of sin and apostasy, and the type of the last is that murmuring of Korah, when there was a miraculous judgment of the transgressors by fire. The natural inference from this type is distinct and plain. It leads us to expect the Advent of the Lord

and a fiery judgment, before any season of millennial peace and glory.

But it is in the xvth chapter, that we have the most full description of the events connected with our Lord's advent. The passage which chiefly bears on it is the following :—

1 Cor. xv. 22—26. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order : Christ the first fruits ; afterward (ἔπειτα) they that are Christ's at his coming. Afterward (εἶτα) cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God the Father ; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death shall be destroyed. For he hath put all things under his feet ; but when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

This important passage yields us two or three evident conclusions, which all confirm the arguments that have been already adduced. First, the apostle is professedly explaining the order of the resurrection. He begins with affirming it as an universal truth—"in Christ all shall be made alive"—and then adds the special statement, "every man in his own order."

Next, in the revelation of this Divine order he specifies three events, separated by two marks of sequence in time. There is the resurrection of Christ, the first-fruits ; an event prior by at least 1800 years to the second advent. There is afterward, at the coming of Christ, the resurrection of them that are His. Afterward there cometh the end, when all rule and authority shall have been put down, and the last enemy, death, shall have been destroyed, at the final resurrection. The terms of order naturally imply an interval, like that between the resurrection of Christ and his Advent,

to ensue between the Advent itself, and that end in which death is to be destroyed.

The next passage which throws light on the same subject is Romans xi. There we have the rejection of Israel, and their final recovery, distinctly revealed. What does the apostle, then, teach us here, concerning the relative order of the Advent and of the Jewish restoration? In verse 26, we have a simple and conclusive answer. "The Deliverer shall come from Sion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." It is the coming of the Lord, returning from the heavenly Jerusalem, which is to be the signal of the promised blessing. If any doubt could arise whether the second Advent is here designed, the prophecy in Isaiah must surely remove it. (Isaiah lix. 17—20.) Every phrase in the description corresponds with the advent in glory, and with that alone. Then, when the Lord has thus appeared for the redemption of his people, the glorious promise is fulfilled—"Arise and shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The whole of that magnificent description, it thus appears, does not precede, but immediately follows, the coming of Messiah in glory.

In the other epistles of St. Paul several passages of the same general tendency are found. Such is the address to the Philippian Church—"Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we are looking for the Lord Jesus; who shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Such are the statements to the Hebrew Christians—"Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many; and to them that look for him he will appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and he will not tarry." The same inference naturally flows from the connexion and train of thought in the second epistle to Timothy. For, after describing the times of infidelity, the apostle proceeds at once, without suggesting any intermediate delay, to the appearing and kingdom of Christ, and the

blessing reserved for all who love his appearing. To suppose an intervening millennium, beside the total silence concerning it, breaks and destroys all the moral unity of the admonition.

The writings of St. Peter, St. James, and St. Jude, all conspire in leading us to the same view. Not only are they entirely silent concerning a millennium before the advent; they supply many clear marks for its exclusion. Thus from St. James, (ch. v.) we may infer that as soon as the latter rain of the Spirit descends, the harvest of the Church will at once be reaped. And clearly neither the type, nor the example of the former rain in the apostolic age, can warrant us in extending the latter rain here promised through a space of many years. The whole passage also implies that the covetousness of the visible Church, in the last days, will be cut short by the appearing of the Judge. This excludes totally a millennium before the advent.

St. Peter, in his second Epistle, confirms the same doctrine. He describes, in successive order, the covetousness of feigned teachers of religion, the corruption and blasphemies of open scoffers, and then the coming of the day of Christ. There is no place left for a millennium to intervene. The very supposition destroys the unity, the power, and the moral connexion of the passage. The same remarks will apply, with equal justice, to the Epistle of St. Jude.

Thus every indirect allusion, or direct statement, in the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles, leads us alike to the same conclusion, that no millennial rest intervenes before the coming of the Lord. Some passages are more, and others less distinct, but all tend, with uniform consent, to the same conclusion. Not one grain of counter evidence is to be found; not one hint, from first to last, of a thousand years, or indeed any period whatever of rest, peace, and prolonged triumph, before the return of the Lord Jesus. Every part concurs with that view of the Advent which results at once from the natural and

unforced meaning of the vision in the book of Revelations (xix. 19—21).

VII. Let us now return to that holy prophecy, and examine more fully its testimony on the same subject. Besides the closing vision, it presents to us many other proofs that the Advent is pre-millennial. This doctrine is strongly implied even in the opening chapter. The coming of the Lord is there presented to us as the immediate hope of the church. Tribulation and patience, not joy and triumph, are to be the experience of the faithful until the Lord himself shall return. But the prophetic visions yield us more distinct and copious evidence.

1. In chapter vii. we have a vision of the heavenly glory, and a distinct allusion to the feast of tabernacles, and the ingathering of the church. But although this appears at the close of a full and detailed prophecy, we have no mention of a previous millennium. On the contrary, warfare, famine, pestilence, martyrdom, political convulsions, and the sealing of an elect remnant out of an unbelieving world, are the only events which are described to us before this celestial triumph and reunion of the people of God.

2. In the series of the seven trumpets a succession of judgments are clearly predicted, to fall upon the Roman world. During their course, it is very plain that no millennium can intervene. But the seventh or last trumpet is clearly the signal for the Advent of the Lord himself. Almost every phrase of the description (xi. 15—19.) bears witness to this truth. "The kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ." And thus the words of our Saviour's parable are then fulfilled—"when he *returned* having received the kingdom." (Luke xix. 15.) A reign forthwith commences which is to be everlasting; a reign, in contrast to the previous time of patient waiting. Vengeance is then inflicted on the angry rebellion of the nations. "The time of the dead is come, that they

should be judged"—words that evidently denote a resurrection. The reward is then given to the prophets of God, which can only be fulfilled at the Advent—as St. Paul declares, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing." The destroyers of the earth will then be destroyed. And this clearly answers the words of the same apostle, 2 Thess. i. 6. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels; in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel."

The same truth appears from the further character of this time, that it is the seventh, or last trumpet. For this is the very term of distinction used elsewhere to denote the era of the resurrection. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the *last trumpet;* for the trumpet shall sound; and *the dead shall be raised* incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Nor is this merely, as some have thought, a verbal correspondence and nothing more. On the contrary, it is one of the clearest links of connexion which the Spirit of God has revealed in the whole word of prophecy. That we might not mistake the reality of the connection, it is confirmed to us by another mark of direct reference. The Apostle introduces his statement with that emphatic clause—"Behold, I shew you a mystery." And in distinct allusion to his words, under the sixth trumpet we have this announcement, made with an oath by the Lord himself—"That in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall surely be finished, as He hath proclaimed the glad tidings to His servants the prophets." Thus, even by the oath of Emmanuel, the seventh trumpet in the Apocalypse is fixed as the time of the long delayed resurrection. The dead

shall then be raised incorruptible, and the living shall be changed.

Nor is the force of these remarks to be avoided by the suggestion that the trumpets, in Revelation, are symbolical, and the last trumpet, named by St. Paul, literal and open. There is no reality in the contrast. The ministry of angels is actually employed through the whole series of the Divine judgments. Their real agency is constant—and their loud warnings are heavenly realities from the first. But as the crisis advances, they become more sensible to the eyes and ears of the unbelieving world. And hence we might naturally infer that the seventh trumpet, which crowns and completes the whole, would be conspicuous and audible—that the angelic ministry, and the blast of judgment, would at length pierce through the sluggish atmosphere of the senses, and become a manifest signal of the Lord's Advent, to the church and even to the world.

3. In chap. xii—xiv. we have another series of prophecy, which, like the former, clearly includes no era of millennial triumph. Yet its close, as before, is attended by the plainest marks of the Lord's Advent. One like unto the Son of man is seen upon a white cloud, and reaps the harvest of the earth—a constant figure to denote the ingathering of the church at the resurrection. The same meaning of the emblem is here confirmed by the spiritual firstfruits described in the same chapter. The ingathering of the saints must therefore ensue immediately on the fall of Babylon, and introduce, instead of following, the millennial kingdom.

4. The same doctrine results, with equal evidence, from the next vision of the seven vials. These clearly precede and introduce the millennium. Yet under the sixth vial we have this distinct and express warning, given by our Lord himself, and interrupting the course of the vision, "Behold, I come quickly! Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments." There is thus another express declaration, from our Lord himself, that His second coming is to precede the millen-

nium ; and a plain command is here given to His church, that they be ready to welcome and receive Him.

5. Another proof may be drawn from the close of the first explanatory vision (Rev. xix. 1—10.) There, immediately on the fall of Babylon, the proclamation is made. "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride hath made herself ready." But this metaphor everywhere denotes the union of the Church with her Lord in the day of the resurrection. Till the bridegroom returns, her state is one of widowhood, but then the cry is made ;—"Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him." And thus we have another convincing proof that the Advent must precede, and not follow, the millennial reign.

We have thus reviewed, briefly, the testimony of the New Testament on this great subject. From first to last the consent and harmony is unbroken. There is not one single passage which implies a long period of rest and triumph before the Lord's return ; there are many, very many, which exclude it, and prove it to be impossible. The distinct and full prophecies of the Apocalypse confirm and ratify the conclusion drawn from the more general statements of Holy Scripture. There is no balance, no division of evidence on this point : it lies entirely, and without exception, on one side. Its tone and spirit throughout may be summed up in the words of St. Paul, "Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Or in the warning of our Lord himself, "Behold, I come quickly, blessed is he that watcheth."

The only way to avoid the weight of these arguments is to expound all the above passages of a figurative, and not a personal Advent. But it is well to consider first the necessary consequence of such a systematic violence done to more than a hundred passages of the word of God. The result will be, that the Scriptures give us no proof whatever of a personal Advent to come. The texts where the Second Advent is announced without any

note of time, are not stronger in expression, and they are fewer in number, than those which need, on this hypothesis, to be explained into a mere figure. And where, then, is the Scriptural evidence for any real advent of the Lord whatever? An invincible argument would be thus supplied to the scoffers of the last days; and the voice of an infidel philosophy would be seconded by the reasonings of a false theology, in their boastful challenge—"Where is the promise of his coming?"

The evidence of the Old Testament would naturally come next in order; but it seems almost needless to unfold it at length; and the subject of the following chapters will partly include it. One remark alone is conclusive as to its real nature. The whole nation of the Jews, though blind to the doctrine of Messiah's sufferings, have always held firmly, both the hope of their own restoration, and of Messiah's Advent in glory, to judge and to reign. What then is their view, drawn from the Old Testament exclusively, of the order of these two great events? In every age, and without exception, they have held that the glorious advent of Messiah *precedes* that promised restoration. Surely this alone is a decisive proof, that the evidence of the prophets leads clearly to the same view which has been derived already from the evangelists and apostles, and which is confirmed by their unvaried testimony in every part of the New Testament.

Indeed it would be easy to shew that in almost every passage where the prophets, from Isaiah to Malachi, have announced the future restitution, it is prefaced by some token, more or less distinct, of the coming of the Lord; and this too an Advent, not to suffer, but to execute judgment, to conquer and to reign. It may be enough to refer simply to four passages—Isaiah xi., xxxiv. and xxxv., lix. and lx., and Zech. xiv., which are among those most frequently adduced as promises of the millennial glory.

If we turn from the direct evidence of Scripture to the history of the Church, it will be found to confirm,

rather than to oppose, the conclusions already drawn from the fountain of inspired truth. Three leading theories, in succession, have prevailed. During the ages before Constantine, the great majority of Christians looked, first, for the coming of Christ, and next, for a millennium then to ensue. In the fourth century, when the marks of growing apostasy were multiplied, a different view of prophecy expelled that which had hitherto prevailed. The coming of the Lord was still viewed as at hand. But the millennium was transposed, and expounded of a thousand, or less than a thousand years, to elapse from the first Advent to the coming of Antichrist just before the final judgment. This creed was almost universal from that time till the Reformation; and has been held since by nearly all Roman Catholic divines, and a large proportion of Protestant Christians in the two following centuries.

Within the last two hundred years, however, a third opinion, distinct from both the former, has obtained wide currency in various branches of the Protestant Church. The millennium is viewed as still future, but is placed before the Second Advent. Many pious Christians, little versed in history, have even come to imagine this to have been the general and constant faith of the Church from the beginning. A greater mistake as to a question of fact was never committed. This hypothesis, of all the three, is far the most recent in its birth, and has had by far the shortest continuance, and has also never obtained so decisive a prevalence as the two others in succession have enjoyed. The second view has still been maintained by nearly all Roman Catholic writers, and not a few Protestant Divines. A large number, also, in the Reformed churches, among whom are many of the leading expositors, have adhered firmly to the view of the early Church. And, besides its disputed prevalence even in its own day, this third hypothesis lies under another adverse presumption. Arising as it has done, in the latter times of the Gospel, and sixteen centuries after the prophecy was given, it has the fatal defect that it

compels the Church to delay the hope of the Advent to a distant period ; and seems thus like an echo, in the last times, to the words of the evil servant, "My Lord delayeth His coming."

Viewed in this aspect, the new-born theory of a spiritual millennium still to come, before the Advent, is far inferior to that which it has replaced. The certain delay, thus interposed, of a thousand years, nullifies the warnings, and frustrates the commands of Scripture, "Be ye always ready, for at such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." It seems thus adapted to encourage and justify the world in a careless neglect of the approaching judgment.

This evil tendency of the theory may, however, in many cases be counteracted by the instincts of a spiritual mind, and a deep impression on the conscience of eternal things. In another aspect, also, the view may claim a superior truth. To fix the millennium, as was done by the second theory, amidst ages of gross idolatry, was a violence to the healthy instinct of true faith and holiness, and opened a wide door for the pretensions of superstition and the worst delusions of Antichristian pride. Even in the holiest minds, this prospect of future judgment, unrelieved by any hope of the earth's redemption, tended to generate a harsh, austere, and ascetic spirit, and to blight and destroy all the gentler graces and social virtues of the Gospel of Christ. On the other hand, the doctrine of a spiritual millennium to come, before the judgment, has a powerful influence to cherish a spirit of active benevolence, and to open a wide field for the exercise of the purest Christian affections, in thoughts, and prayers, and labours of love, for the progress of Christ's kingdom here below. Thus Christian piety tends to assume a more cheerful, hopeful, and active form, and to look with an eye of joyful anticipation upon a world where truth and righteousness are shortly to prevail.

Such are the practical benefits due to the truth which the system contains. But there are also serious evils

which flow from its one great error. The supernatural and divine is sunk and lost in that which is natural and human. Outward means eclipse the Divine sovereignty. The violent glosses which Scripture prophecy is made to endure, blunt the edge of Christian faith, and the distance to which the Advent is removed, lowers the solemn impression of eternal things. Expediency overruns the Church; and even Christian benevolence, divorced from the energy of a simple faith, and the lively hope of the resurrection, may thus assume a fatal resemblance to the spurious and godless philanthropy which marks the infidel systems of the last days.

On the other hand it must be confessed that the sounder view of the first ages was often mixed, in the infancy of the Church, with puerile conceptions, and sometimes, by Cerinthian heretics, perverted into an unnatural union with sensual errors and delusions. Even among orthodox Christians, it was held perhaps rather as an isolated fact, than with an enlightened view of its harmony with the whole course and object of the Divine dispensations. And this made it more easy for it to be set aside, when, in the fourth century, the intellect of the Church was rapidly developed, at the very time that its pure and simple faith had begun to decay.

And what then is the practical conclusion from this review? The duty of Christians, in the present day, is to collect from the past history of the Church these various elements of truth, and to guard themselves, by the lessons of dear-bought experience, from their attendant and parasitic errors. From the consent of the early and the middle ages, we must learn to renounce that delusion of the last days which would justify the language of the evil servant, "My Lord delayeth his coming," and, against all the evidence of Scripture, would interpose a millennium before that coming of the Lord, which He now proclaims to us under the sixth vial as near at hand. By the harmonious witness of the first ages and the last, we must reject the cold negation of that theory which sees nothing in store for our earth

but annihilation in a fiery judgment; and shuts its eyes to the numerous and joyful promises of a rich and full triumph of peace, righteousness, and holiness, on this very planet, which the Incarnate Saviour has hallowed with his own sacred footsteps, and which he has ransomed by His sacrifice from the dominion of vanity and sin. By the mature experience of successive ages, unfolding more clearly the mystery of God, we must purify the millennial hope of the first Christians from all the sediment it may have contracted in earthly minds; and thus unfold it in its high and spiritual beauty, and in all the grandeur it assumes when read in the mirror of God's eternal counsels. Then will the Church, enlightened by a Scriptural hope, combine in her experience the most various elements of Divine grace. Looking for the sure redemption of the earth, every social affection will be called into lively exercise, and a cheering impulse be given to all the devoted labours of pure benevolence and Christian love. But waiting also for the coming of the Lord, and the promised resurrection, her faith and love will be raised above the blighting infection of an infidel age, and assume once more their supernatural dignity. Her hopes will no longer be confounded with the vain dreams of ungodly philosophers, but will be anchored within the veil; and all her desires and anticipations will be fixed on that day, when the Desire of nations shall come; when His blessed feet, which for our sake were nailed to the cross, shall stand once more on the Mount of Olives, and "the Lord shall build up Zion, and appear in His glory."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GREAT IMAGE.

DAN. II. 34, 35.—"THOU SAWEST TILL THAT A STONE WAS CUT OUT WITHOUT HANDS, WHICH SMOTE THE IMAGE UPON HIS FEET THAT WERE OF IRON AND CLAY, AND BRAKE THEM TO PIECES. THEN WAS THE IRON, THE CLAY, THE BRASS, THE SILVER, AND THE GOLD, BROKEN TO PIECES TOGETHER, AND BECAME LIKE THE CHAFF OF THE SUMMER THRESHINGFLOORS; AND THE WIND CARRIED THEM AWAY, THAT NO PLACE WAS FOUND FOR THEM."

VII. 9—11.—"I BEHELD, TILL THE THRONES WERE PLANTED; AND THE ANCIENT OF DAYS DID SIT, WHOSE GARMENT WAS WHITE AS SNOW, AND THE HAIR OF HIS HEAD LIKE THE PURE WOOL: HIS THRONE WAS LIKE THE FIERY FLAME, AND HIS WHEELS LIKE BURNING FIRE. A FIERY STREAM ISSUED AND CAME FROM BEFORE HIM: THOUSAND THOUSANDS MINISTERED UNTO HIM, AND TEN THOUSAND TIMES TEN THOUSAND STOOD BEFORE HIM: THE JUDGMENT WAS SET AND THE BOOKS WERE OPENED. I BEHELD, THEN, BECAUSE OF THE VOICE OF THE GREAT WORDS WHICH THE HORN SPAKE; I BEHELD, EVEN TILL THE BEAST WAS SLAIN, AND HIS BODY DESTROYED, AND GIVEN TO THE BURNING FLAME."

VII. 26. —"—AND THEY SHALL BE GIVEN INTO HIS HAND, UNTIL A TIME AND TIMES, AND THE DIVIDING OF A TIME. BUT THE JUDGMENT SHALL SIT, AND THEY SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS DOMINION, TO CONSUME AND TO DESTROY IT UNTO THE END."

THE fulfilment of the visions has already been traced, in historical order, from the time of Daniel to the days in which we live. Here it was needful to pause, and before launching into the undiscovered future, to examine the nature, and ascertain the broad outline, of those hopes which the word of God elsewhere reveals to us on the coming kingdom of our Lord. Such has been the object of the three foregoing chapters, and the following are the conclusions to which we are led by a full induction of scripture evidence. First, there is still

in prospect, and immediately before the church, a time of millennial peace and blessedness here on earth. Next, even after its close, there will be new heavens, and a new earth ; in which holy inhabitants will be training up, through countless generations, for a celestial glory. And finally, the second advent of our Lord precedes the millennium, and introduces the promised restoration of all things. Not until the Prince of peace shall appear, will righteousness and peace begin to triumph ; and not until the great Head of the Church is revealed, will the Church be freed from the cross, and have her brows encircled with the diadem of glory.

Here then, with these truths to guide us, we resume the course of the sacred visions. From our actual place in the last times of the fourth empire we look abroad on the wide range of Divine providence. Not Moses, from the top of Pisgah, had so magnificent a prospect spread before him as is here laid open to the view of the Christian. Backward, we gaze on the fulfilled history of four mighty empires, predicted from the first in the word of God, and involving the destiny of millions upon millions of immortal souls. Around us, we behold the kingdoms of the fourth empire, where the weakness of clay and the strength of iron are strangely blended ; and see the little horn, once all-powerful, and now wasted by severe judgments, but struggling still for supremacy, and mighty and terrible even in its decay. We see the distant ends of the earth brought together by political changes, and facilities of intercourse unparalleled in all past ages ; as if in silent warning of some great and universal change that is now near at hand. Before us, with the lamp of inspired prophecy, we gaze on an immeasurable vista of glory ; a kingdom of righteousness that will last for ever, and will people a holy and happy world with the countless generations of the redeemed. The imagination is overwhelmed with a spectacle so vast and magnificent. We feel our own littleness, and the littleness of things around us, when once the veil is removed from these Divine counsels ; and learn to

join once more in the apostolic exclamation, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

An inquiry must now arise of deep interest. By what steps is the church to be conducted from her present state into the good land of promise which lies before her? What are the events in immediate prospect, and how will the present system of worldly power be exchanged for the eternal triumph of Messiah's kingdom? To this inquiry an answer has been in part supplied by the previous chapters. But the visions before us exhibit the same truth in close connexion with the great empires whose history has been already described. They reveal to us a sudden and mighty change, in which the image shall be broken and swept away, and a new and holier kingdom be established which shall last for ever. It is these important elements of the prophecy which have next to pass in review. They are full of the most thrilling interest; for they involve the immediate destinies both of the world at large, and of the whole church of God.

1. And, first of all, the vision sets before us a stone, cut out without hands, which smites the image on its feet and destroys it. The exact meaning of this emblem has now to be ascertained.

The stone has been expounded, by a very general consent, to be our Lord himself. And indeed his own words in the parable seem clearly to fix its application, when he says to the Pharisees, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." A difference, however, has prevailed, as to the event designed by the stone smiting the image. This was referred by some early writers to the triumphs of the gospel after the first advent. But Theodoret and others, with more justice, have

referred it to the second coming. They saw that the stone was to smite the image on the toes of iron and clay; and that the event must therefore follow the division of the Roman empire. This opinion has, for the same reason, been received by the best expositors of modern times.

But here some difficulty still remains. For the stone is first mentioned after the division of the former empire has been described. Nor do the emblems imply, though perhaps they do not exclude, a long interval between the excision of the stone and the time when the image is broken in pieces. How then may this appearance of a partial anachronism be removed?

To this inquiry, the answer will be found in another doctrine of the New Testament. There is a close and intimate union between the Lord Jesus Christ and his redeemed people. He is the Head, they are the body. He is the first-born among many brethren. As He is the stone, they are lively stones also. He is the first-fruits of the resurrection, and they are the harvest. And as He was miraculously born, without human power, so are they supernaturally born anew of the Holy Spirit. The very name, Christ, is applied to them conjointly with their Head. To them, by his own promise, He gives a share in his own commission, to bruise the nations with a rod of iron. And thus it cannot be surprising, if the Spirit of God should have included them also within the emblem of the stone in the present vision.

Such appears to be the full meaning of the symbol in the prophecy. Our Lord himself, by his miraculous conception and his resurrection from the grave, was "cut out without hands," with a direct and wonderful triumph of divine power. His people in like manner are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." In the day of the resurrection their separation will be complete; and being then united to their Lord, they will form one mystic body, and will, along with Him, execute the predicted judgments, and

appear with him in glory when He shall descend from heaven. It is only when this spiritual separation of the last believer shall be complete, and the church of the first-born shall be raised from the dead, that the prediction will be fulfilled ; and the stone will smite the feet of the image, and break it in pieces.

This view of the meaning is confirmed also by the parallel vision in chapter vii. There are two clauses which answer to the description of the stone. The former of these is in verse 13. "One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven." And the latter occurs in the angelic explanation, verse 18. "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom." And thus it would appear from the comparison that both our Lord himself, and his risen saints, are included under the emblem of the stone in the former vision. The order of the prophecy thus remains distinct, and free from all inversion. It is only after the fourth empire has long been rent into its ten kingdoms, that the mystic stone will at length be complete, and the church of the first-born be gathered into the presence of the Lord. The excision will then be fully accomplished, and the predicted judgment of the nations will speedily ensue.

The stone is to smite the image upon its feet of iron and clay, and the judgment is to come upon the kings of the divided fourth empire. This disproves at once the interpretation which refers the prophecy to the first triumphs of the Gospel. For these were silent and gradual, not sudden and abrupt, and they began long before the division of the empire was complete.

The word of God, in other passages, throws a further light on this prophetic statement. In the great tribulation, Matt. xxiv. 29, which is just before the advent, a vast multitude of converts, Rev. vii., will be gathered in. But the remnant of the nations of the west, after this ingathering of true converts, will only rush into more open and daring apostasy. They will be found gathered under one head in the Holy Land, (Rev. xix.

18 ; xvi. 17. Ez. xxxviii.) confederate against God's ancient people. There, according to the burden of many prophecies, the stroke of judgment will fall. When every extract of righteousness and truth has been severed from the midst of them, and only physical force, leagued with warlike pride and open ungodliness, is left behind, the power of Christ will be visibly displayed. He will then be revealed with his saints, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel." The sublime warnings of Isaiah will then be fulfilled, (chap. xxx. xxxi. xxxiv.) and the rebellious kingdoms will be confounded at the presence of the Lord, " whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem."

The effect of this solemn judgment will be the total destruction of the great image. " The iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, were broken in pieces together, and became as the chaff of the summer threshing-floors." Other prophecies throw light on this magnificent emblem. The great confederacy gathered in Palestine, we are thus taught (Isa. lxvi.) will be almost entirely destroyed ; and the few who escape will become messengers to announce the terrible judgments of Messiah, even to the ends of the world. The nations that survive shall be put under a new dispensation, not of grace, but of righteousness. Israel shall have the pre-eminence, and be the ruling kingdom, (Isaiah xiv. 1, 2 ; lxi.) and " all nations shall go up to the throne of the Lord, to Jerusalem." And thus, even though a remnant may be spared from the people of the four empires, the whole constitution of worldly power will be for ever abolished, and be replaced by the holy and righteous dominion of the Son of Man.

The same event is described to us, under emblems of a different kind, in the second vision. And here several questions may arise, before the exact meaning of the prophecy can be clearly seen.

First, whom are we to understand by the Ancient of Days, and whom by the Son of Man ? God the Father

is invisible, and the Son of Man is the title appropriated continually to our Lord himself. Yet that the Ancient of days is no mere creature must be plain to every simple mind from all the features of this remarkable vision. The difficulty is removed, when we remember, first, that the vision is emblematic; and next, that our Lord combines two distinct natures, as the Son of God and the Son of Man. As the Son of God he represents visibly all the glory of the Father himself, (Matt. xxv.) in which He will appear in the great day. As the Son of Man, he is the head and representative of the whole Church, on whose behalf He pleads in heaven, and with whom He has promised to share his visible and human dominion. "I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me." "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me on my throne." Hence, from this union of contrasted attributes, our Lord is spoken of, in several prophecies, in terms that might seem at first to denote two distinct persons. "He shall sit and rule on his throne; and he shall be a priest on his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech. vi. 13.) So also, in Isaiah liii., Messiah seems to be both the speaker, as the Son of God, and the object of the prophecy as the Son of Man,

The view thus suggested appears to be confirmed by the vision itself. The Son of man, who comes in the clouds of heaven, is plainly our Lord; who himself appropriates and applies the words, when standing before the Jewish High Priest. And yet the angel, in his interpretation, seems clearly to imply that the people of Christ are also included. "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom." "Judgment was given to the saints of the Most High." The title therefore, reveals our Lord in the glory of his perfect manhood, wherein, as the Head, he represents the whole body of his ransomed people. We are thus led to a similar view of the other emblem. The Ancient of days will also be a title of our Lord, but solely in his

Divine nature, wherein he represents, before angels and men, the person and majesty of the eternal Father.

The other features of the prophecy agree with the above exposition. For the description resembles very closely the vision of Christ in Rev. i. The language that describes the judgment answers in part to the words of Rev. xix.; and in part to those of Rev. xx. The beast is destroyed, as in the former, and given to the burning flame. As in the latter, the judgment is set and the books are opened. The whole course of judgment, here described in its first commencement, is thus distinguished afterwards into its two chief stages at the beginning and the close of the millennial kingdom.

There is another question of some difficulty which naturally arises here. Does the vision of the Ancient of days refer to events which precede, or only to those which attend and follow, the visible appearing of the Son of Man? The grandeur of the symbols would seem to incline us to the latter, the order of the prophecy to the former exposition. There are two reasons which perhaps are decisive in favour of the former. The angel's exposition seems to imply that, after the judgment is begun, there will first be a gradual wasting of the little horn's dominion, and then afterwards his entire overthrow. "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Now that final overthrow is often joined, without any apparent pause or interval, to the coming of the Lord. Again, it appears from the same explanation that the judgment begins whenever the time, times, and a half, shall have expired. But in chap. xii., a further period is given of 1335 days, or seventy-five prophetic days beyond the former; and the whole of which seems to be fulfilled before the visible display of the Lord's presence. And hence the judgment of the Ancient of days must have begun earlier than the actual appearing of the Redeemer.

Where, then, must we suppose the thrones to be planted, and how are these august symbols to be ex-

plained? To remove this difficulty, we must remember that the most high God, in his own Divine glory, is invisible to the eye of sense; and even the Son of God is naturally visible to men in virtue of his manhood only. The judgments which He will exercise, in his Divine nature, may begin before his open appearance as the Son of Man. The mystery of God may thus be gradually revealed. A season of signal judgment, wherein our Lord, as the invisible ruler, will waste and consume his adversaries, may prepare the way for his open revelation, in which they will be utterly and for ever overthrown.

Such appears to be the true meaning of the vision. The thrones are planted, not in the third heavens, for there God's throne is set up from all eternity; nor on the earth itself, in a visible appearance to the eyes of men; but in the lower heavens, just beyond the reach of human sense, and yet bordering on our world, where the Judge is shortly to appear with his ransomed people. There, as the apostle elsewhere tells us, they will be caught up into his presence, before He is openly revealed. There also the ten thousand times ten thousand ministering angels will have been already assembled, near to the Judge, and waiting to execute his Divine commands. There, while the record of past iniquity is opened and read, the commission will be given, against the apostate power, of wasting and decay. At this mysterious judgment-seat the saints will have to appear, and there to give account of their deeds in God's presence, before they are manifested with their Lord, and receive the kingdom. At length, when the last hour of sufferance is expired, and the times are completely fulfilled, the mystery of God will be finished; the Lord, as the Son of Man, and the Head of the church, will receive the kingdom from the Father. He will then appear visibly, as is here predicted, in the clouds of heaven, to complete the overthrow of the great enemy, and to introduce his people into the promised inheritance of the redeemed earth.

Such are the truths concerning the judgment of the Four Empires which these visions appear to unfold. These solemn changes are doubtless fast approaching, and may perhaps now be very near at hand. Let us endeavour, then, to derive some spiritual lessons from this part of the Divine prophecy, and pass beyond the mere surface of events into the moral grandeur of those prospects which are awaiting the Church of God.

And first, let us realize, by the light of prophecy, the actual course of the world's history, past, present, and to come. When the visions were revealed to Daniel, Babylon was still in the height of its power. Then Cyrus arose, the promised deliverer of Israel, and the kingdom of Persia, on Belshazzar's overthrow, attained the supreme dominion. Under that mighty empire, which reached from the borders of India to the shores of Greece, a signal type was given of the whole mystery of Providence, in Haman's pride and fall, and in Mordecai's exaltation and greatness. But when Xerxes had stirred up all Asia against the realm of Greece, the tide of dominion was rolled back; and Marathon, Thermopylæ, Salamis, and Platæa, names conspicuous in classic fame, accomplished the predestined sentence of Persian decay. Then Alexander, the mighty king, arose, and with the swiftness of a winged fowl overran the East, and, by diffusing the language of Greece, prepared the way for the rapid triumphs of the Gospel. Next, after the wars of Hannibal, Rome, succeeded to power; and Philip, Antiochus, Perseus, and all the kings of the East, sank rapidly and in succession beneath its iron sceptre. The Prince of Life then appeared, and was rejected by His own people. Messiah was cut off, and the Jews, rejected for their unbelief, were given up to the Roman armies, and led away captive into all nations. The arch of Titus still remains in the eternal city, an affecting memorial of that solemn hour of judgment.

And now a fresh era of Providence was begun. The proud and iron Empire, seeking to crush the faith of

Christ, and to root out the Church of God, was crushed and broken in its turn. Its iron strength was mingled with the weakness of clay. Barbarian levies were mingled with its armies. Division and jealousy weakened the sinews of its strength. The East and West were parted asunder ; and at length the fierce barbarians of the north broke in like a deluge on the Western Empire, and, on the ruin of the prostrate monarchy, ten separate kingdoms, as here predicted, arose. In the midst of these there arose also another power, diverse from all the rest. Small in its territory, and stealthy in its progress, by degrees it assumed the sovereignty over the European kingdoms, and blended them once more into one firm confederacy of idolatrous corruption. The Papacy of Rome, small in the size of its possessions, vast and unbounded in its spiritual claims, rose at length into supreme and triumphant dominion, and for long ages crushed and persecuted, even to death, the faithful witnesses of God.

This mysterious Power, for more than twelve centuries, has practised and prospered amidst the commonwealth of European nations. At length the time, times, and a half, drew toward their close. The storm of infidel violence was then let loose on the papal kingdoms, and Rome itself sunk and was buried for a time beneath the hurricane. A new era of liberty and equality, with orgies like those of hell, proclaimed that the solemn hour of God's judgment was begun. But before the final consummation, there was to be a pause of delay. The dominion, partly consumed, like the power of Egypt under Pharaoh was to recover for a time, and to muster all its strength, before the great and decisive overthrow.

Such is the view of the past, and what is the prospect for the future ? The word of God gives a blessed answer. The kingdoms of the world shall be the kingdoms of God and of his Christ. The receiving of Israel shall be as life from the dead. "The Lord will build up Zion, and He will appear in His glory." "All the ends of the earth shall turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the

nations shall worship before Him." "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom." Glorious in the beauty of the resurrection, the "meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Then, after a thousand years of prevailing righteousness, for a short season the scattered elements of evil will unite in one last assault on the beloved land of Israel, and the city of God. Afterwards will ensue the judgment of the unbelieving dead, and the final extinction of all the powers of evil. Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed. The new heavens and the new earth shall then be manifested in their eternal beauty. The Church of the first-born shall reign for ever over a redeemed world ; and the nations of the saved shall walk in the light of the heavenly city. From age to age, throughout the thousand generations of the world to come, the promise to Abraham may then be fulfilled ; and new heirs of glory may be training on earth to share in the fuller blessedness of the redeemed above. Perhaps even from our planet, honoured above all worlds by the Incarnation of the Son of God, the streams of grace may then flow forth to distant regions of the universe ; and distant worlds be awaiting their destined possessors from the race of Adam, now fallen, but then for ever redeemed.

And thus, through perpetual ages, the glory of God and of the Lamb will be more and more fully revealed. The hosts of saints and angels will themselves be lost in wonder and adoration at the stupendous vision of Divine goodness. They will adore for ever the riches of God's love ; and the virtue of that one sacrifice, which could turn even the depths of ruin and misery into such a weight of glory, far surpassing in its greatness all that the heart of man or angel could ever conceive.

Such is the retrospect behind us ; such also the delightful and wonderful prospect which now opens before the Church of God. And how will the transition be made ? Will it be a smooth and gradual progress, by which the fallen world shall slide into happiness, it

knows not how ; and after the storms of six thousand years, like a cradled infant, rock itself to rest ? Is it by the common efforts of Christian zeal, so that the Church militant of our day may be able to take up the boast of the Assyrian, only of a nobler triumph, and say, " By the strength of my hand have I done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent ?" No, such is not the lesson of past experience ; nor are such hopes confirmed by the true sayings of God. A great work indeed is allotted to the Church, but of the firstfruits, not of the harvest, of preparation, not of the full triumph. The redemption will be assuredly complete, but it will dawn in righteous judgments. It is through a dark cloud that the bow of the covenant will shine forth in its brightness on a fallen world. Before the stone shall become a mountain, and fill the whole earth, the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and gold, must be broken to pieces together, and be driven away like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor. The Son of Man must first appear in the clouds of heaven, and his true saints and servants be gathered into his presence, to render their account, and then to receive their kingdom.

These truths, drawn from the clear testimony of the present visions, as well as from all other prophecies, are thus fatal to many expectations prevalent in the Church of Christ in these latter days. We are not sailing, on the smooth current of worldly ease and of liberal philosophy, into the haven of rest. The world will be regenerate, not by the might, or wisdom, or virtue of man, but in spite of his resistance, and by the triumph of righteous judgment over his rebellion. Even to the last, the Church must set her face against the stream, and renounce the vain dreams of safety and worldly peace, if she would secure the blessing which God has promised.

But besides the danger of a false peace, and hopes which, being without warrant in God's word, can lead only to presumption or delusion, there is an opposite danger against which we should be equally on our guard. It is true that the word of prophecy here reveals

to us the prospect of judgment, and a dissolution of worldly power by the coming of the Lord. But even this truth, when divorced from others, may be corrupted into a dangerous error. It is not designed to destroy the charities of life, or to weaken our reverence for the powers ordained of God, or to dim one tender emotion of interest and affection toward our fallen world. No, its true purpose is the reverse. There are other doctrines with which this prospect of the judgment must be combined, if we would neither be hardened into selfish and unfeeling pride, nor weighed down into melancholy or despair. Not until the last elements of truth and righteousness have been separated from the mass, will the Stone smite the Image, and shatter it to the winds. Not until the saints are raised from the tomb, will power be given to them over the nations. Now, on the contrary, their office is to labour in hope, and to suffer with patience. Like the angels in heaven, they are to rejoice over even one sinner that repenteth. And when the fruits of the Gospel fall short, as they do continually, of their heart's desire, they are to take refuge in the covenant, and in the assurance that the work, too mighty for them alone, will be completed by the Lord himself, when he shall visibly appear. Even in the prospect of that most solemn day, they are to find comfort in the promise, "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment." "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever"—the same on the throne of glory, as in agony and on the cross. They who can enter into the secret of His presence, in the most solemn hour will find peace in the confidence of the patriarch, "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?" He who died for all men in bitter anguish when the veil is removed from the eyes of his people, will be found to be most gracious, even amidst his severest judgments.

The stone which is to smite the image is cut out without hands. These words relate, in the first place, to the miraculous conception and resurrection of the

Lord Jesus. But they include also the spiritual renewal and resurrection of his people. In this view they open to us a field of holy meditation. The true people of Christ, however forgotten or despised, are yet the destined inheritors of the earth. The conquerors of this world are only like meteors, that glare for a moment in the sky, with a baleful light, and then suddenly disappear. The meanest believer is a star, to be planted hereafter by the hand of God in the firmament, and appointed to shine, with a peaceful and blessed light, for ever and ever. Amidst the changes of the four great empires, a secret work has been carried on, unknown to the world, and overlooked by the proud conquerors of the earth. It is the excision of the mystic stone. One servant of God after another is called out of a sinful world, trained by affliction and trial, and then rests in the grave, awaiting the resurrection. The number will at length be complete. When the last shall be gathered in, the trumpet shall sound, and the mystic stone shall be completely separate from a world of corruption. Then will the Lord appear and all his saints with Him, and the prediction be fulfilled—"The Lord shall be king over all the earth; there shall be one Lord, and his name one."

Now this truth reflects a clear light on the true nature and perfection of kingly dominion here on earth. When we see the future consummation, we learn the true standard towards which kings and governors ought continually to aspire. How monstrous is the notion that the risen saints will exercise their dominion, as if the children of men were only brutes that perish! So monstrous it is really, in God's sight, to maintain that rulers and statesmen are to govern without any reference to the truth of God, or to the immortal welfare of the millions entrusted to their charge. It is a blindness, due to ignorance of the word of prophecy, which alone could seduce pious and holy men into so enormous a falsehood. No, the true standard of royalty and dominion shines out before us in the triumph of the mystic stone, when it swells into the lofty moun-

tain. Now, the believer is separated by the Holy Spirit, that he may be prepared for the high office he will fulfil in the kingdom of God. The work of Satan is to shut God out of the government of His own universe. The aim and desire of the Christian is to have every thought and action brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Such will hereafter be the kingdom of the mountain ; and such ought to be the kingdoms of the world even now. To renounce, as rulers, the authority of divine truth, and profess neutrality between light and darkness, is boldly to take our stand with the image that will be broken in pieces, and to renounce all part and share in that kingdom of the mountain that shall stand for ever.

But the same emblem reveals to us further the close and intimate union between Christ and His people. They will be joined with their Lord in unbroken fellowship. "To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations, even as I received of my Father." "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." How vividly is this truth implied in these sacred visions, when one and the same figure denotes the exaltation both of the Lord himself, and of his faithful people !

The iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, are to be broken to pieces together. This great and momentous change is described in many other prophecies, as for instance, in the following ; (Isaiah ii. 10—22 ; xi. 4, 5 ; xiv. 1—4 ; xvii. 12—14 ; xxx. 27—33 ; xxxi. 4—9 ; xxxiv. ; lxiii. 1—6. Jer. xxv. 30—33 ; xxx. 11—17. Ezek. xxxviii. Joel iii. 1—15. Micah iv. 11—13. Zeph. iii. 8. Zech. xii, xiv.) It implies, not a total destruction of human life, for a remnant are to be spared, (Isaiah lxvi. 19 ; x. 19.) but a total dissolution of the polity of these earthly kingdoms. Idolatry, and the pride of national greatness, shall be abolished and done away. Through the whole range of the four empires, from Persia and Babylon to

the shores of the Atlantic, old things shall have passed away, and a new constitution of righteous and holy dominion shall emerge out of the ruins. Nothing will survive but that which is based on the pure and living word of the eternal God. The idols of superstition, and the idols of covetousness and ambition, shall alike be thrown to the moles and bats ; and the remnant of the Gentiles, on whom God's name had been called, shall seek after the Lord, with a deep and unfeigned reverence for His great and terrible name. Religion will then be the great, the all-absorbing reality ; and Jerusalem, the city of the great King, be the centre of holy worship, and the new metropolis of a ransomed world. Vain will have been the plans of worldly statesmen to preserve the tottering balance of worldly power. Vain equally, and still more vain, will have been the hopes of infidels and anarchists, to rule in the whirlwind of popular rebellion, and regenerate a world by the wild fury of democratic rage. All these things will have passed like a dream ; and while the chaff of the broken image is swept before the winds, the mystic stone will be seen, exalted in its heavenly grandeur, and will fill the whole earth with a dominion of peace and holiness as glorious as it is everlasting. How unlike the poor and blind calculations of mere human wisdom are the sure and blessed hopes which these prophecies reveal !

Before the final change, " the thrones are planted," and the Ancient of days enters on the work of judgment. The books of past history, with their long record of crime, are open before him. While the dominion of the little horn is taken away, unseen to the eye of the world, this review and judgment is fulfilling in the presence of God. How small a part of history is that which the eye of sense can discern ! It can trace only the outward changes ; but their secret causes and springs are in the sanctuary above. And thus we may well believe that while the storm of infidel violence was desolating the kingdoms of the West, events still

more solemn and momentous were passing, unseen, in the upper world. The sins of Christendom for ages and generations were there unfolded before the eyes of the supreme Judge. Innumerable hosts of angels stood waiting, in deep suspense, the commission of judgment, and beheld, with wonder and admiration, the infinite patience of the God of heaven, and the wild passions of ungodly multitudes on the earth below. And even now, though the pause of Divine forbearance may still continue a season longer, could the veil be removed from our eyes, as from those of Elisha and his servant, a scene more surprising and glorious might open to our view on the very confines of our fallen earth. When the last vial, poured into the air, shall remove the mists of sensual blindness, the mystery of God will be finished, and the unseen glory of that celestial judgment will dawn upon the senses of an unbelieving world.

V. But the judgment does not long continue to be mysterious and unseen. The Son of man comes with the clouds of heaven, and receives the kingdom from the Ancient of days. The invisible providence and glory of the Godhead is then revealed in the person of the incarnate Saviour. He will come, who is the Desire of all nations. And at His coming, his great work will be, not to destroy, but to plant and to build. First of all, indeed, when his people are gathered together, the open rebels against his dominion will be sentenced, and the beast destroyed and given to the burning flame. But then "mercy will rejoice against judgment." Then will it be his glorious work, as the Prince of peace, to "raise up the earth, and to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." Then, with supreme power and the diadems of glory encircling his head, all the depth of his love will flow forth to heal the deep wounds of judgment in this redeemed world. "Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." The Lord will accomplish, to the uttermost, His gracious promise. "I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my

people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord of hosts."

Such are the prospects of coming judgment on the four empires, which these visions, compared with other parts of Scripture, seem to open before us,—a solemn and magnificent close to the long and weary course of violence and ambition, of covetousness and vain glory. How different will every event of past history appear, when read in the light of this wonderful consummation, the light which streams from the dawning of the Sun of righteousness! How vain the triumphs of mere ambition! How empty the boast of infidel deceivers! How truly will all wisdom then appear to be folly, save "the wisdom of the just;" who have looked on this life only as a pilgrimage, and have anchored all their hopes, and fixed all their desires, on the salvation then to be revealed, and the unspeakable joy and blessedness of the world to come!

CHAPTER XIX.

THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF MAN.

DAN. II. 35.—"AND THE STONE THAT SMOTE THE IMAGE BECAME A GREAT MOUNTAIN, AND FILLED THE WHOLE EARTH."

44, 45. —"AND IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS SHALL THE GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM THAT SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED; AND THE KINGDOM SHALL NOT BE LEFT TO OTHER PEOPLE; BUT IT SHALL BREAK IN PIECES AND CONSUME ALL THESE KINGDOMS, AND IT SHALL STAND FOR EVER. FORASMUCH AS THOU SAWEST THAT THE STONE WAS CUT OUT OF THE MOUNTAIN WITHOUT HANDS, AND THAT IT BRAKE IN PIECES THE IRON, THE CLAY, THE BRASS, THE SILVER, AND THE GOLD; THE GREAT GOD HATH MADE KNOWN TO THE KING WHAT SHALL COME TO PASS HEREAFTER: AND THE DREAM IS CERTAIN, AND THE INTERPRETATION THEREOF IS SURE."

VII. 13, 14.—"I SAW IN THE NIGHT VISIONS, AND BEHOLD, ONE LIKE UNTO THE SON OF MAN CAME WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN, AND CAME TO THE ANCIENT OF DAYS, AND THEY BROUGHT HIM NEAR BEFORE HIM. AND THERE WAS GIVEN HIM DOMINION, AND GLORY, AND A KINGDOM. THAT ALL PEOPLE, NATIONS, AND LANGUAGES SHOULD SERVE HIM: HIS DOMINION IS AN EVERLASTING DOMINION THAT SHALL NOT PASS AWAY, AND HIS KINGDOM THAT WHICH SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED."

18.—"BUT THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH SHALL TAKE THE KINGDOM, AND POSSESS THE KINGDOM FOR EVER, EVEN FOR EVER AND EVER."

27.—"AND THE KINGDOM AND DOMINION, AND THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE OF THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH, WHOSE KINGDOM IS AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM, AND ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE AND OBEY HIM."

THE Holy Spirit, in these words, announces to us the last and most glorious truth of the whole prophecy. The previous history is a dark and gloomy pathway, but here we have the divine temple to which it leads. That truth is the future and eternal dominion of the Son of man. This was the great object of the divine counsels, when the heavens and the earth were framed in the beginning. With a view to this triumphant

close, the course of the world has been sustained, for six thousand years, amidst sin, and misery, and rebellion. All the perplexed and countless changes of past history have only been preparing the way for this blissful consummation. And hence, of all subjects which can occupy the thoughts of an immortal being, this is one of the most wonderful and glorious. Herein the travail of the Redeemer's soul will be fulfilled. Herein the truth of God's promises and the depth of His counsels will be manifested for ever; and all His attributes of holiness and majesty, of love and wisdom, will meet in their most sublime display. A dim and feeble sketch only can be offered here: the truth itself is overwhelming and boundless. May He who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, enable us, in some measure to understand these mysteries of his word, hidden from ages and from generations; but which it is His gracious purpose to reveal, more and more fully, in these latter days! Let us first endeavour to ascertain by the direct evidence of God's word, the main characters of this future kingdom; and then derive from this hope some of those practical lessons which it supplies, in rich variety, for the whole Church of God.

The time of the kingdom here predicted includes the promised millennium, and reaches far beyond into the ages that will follow. That it must include the millennium, results clearly from the many testimonies of Scripture which have been already given. It appears with equal evidence, when we compare the description, Daniel vii. 11—18, with the similar prophecy in the book of Revelation. But the kingdom here announced is not limited to one thousand years: five times, in these two visions, it is declared to be everlasting. It reaches therefore far beyond the millennium itself, and comprehends those countless ages in which the Son of God and his ransomed people shall reign for ever. (Rev. xxii.)

But here a difficulty may arise. For St. Paul, (1 Cor. xv. 24.) clearly reveals to us a time, when

"the kingdom shall be delivered up to God, even the Father." This period the Holy Spirit calls emphatically, THE END. How then shall the Son of man continue to reign, after this end has come?

To solve this doubt, we must remember the various attributes and titles which meet in our Divine Saviour. He is perfect God and perfect man, in two distinct natures and in one person for ever. As very God of very God, He is one with the eternal Father; and as man He is one with his redeemed people. But He is also the Mediator between God and a fallen world. In the fulfilment of this office He veiled for a time his divine glory, and though truly God, "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." Therefore He will also hereafter, as Mediator, exercise for a season a peculiar dominion, till all enemies shall be subdued under his feet. The era of this peculiar sovereignty will be the millennium, or the day of future judgment. As God, He will share for ever in the supreme worship and dominion rendered to God the Father. The throne which is surrounded with eternal adoration, is the throne "of God and of the Lamb." As man, He will also enjoy an everlasting dominion to be shared with his people. But the peculiar dominion which he holds as Mediator will cease. When death, the last enemy shall be destroyed, its purpose will have been completely attained. The God-man will then resign that special dominion which He holds during the time of judgment. Thenceforth, as the Lamb in the midst of the throne, He will share in his Father's glory; and, as the Son of man, He will never cease to exercise visible sovereignty over a ransomed universe. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom shall be no end."

Such is the holy dominion announced in the vision. Let us now search into some of the main elements which compose its Divine glory.

First of all, among the excellences of this kingdom will be the personal manifestation of the Saviour. Thus

it is revealed in Daniel's prophecy. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like unto the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven." The same truth, in reference to the same time, is re-echoed by the beloved disciple. "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." And still more fully in the vision near the close of the prophecy. There, before this promised kingdom appears, we have the full description. "I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. . . . And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God." The same presence of the Lord in His kingdom is taught in the message of Gabriel to the Virgin,—"The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom shall be no end." He is the nobleman who went into a far country, to receive the kingly dominion, and to return. And when He has received the kingdom, He will return according to his own promise. Then will be fulfilled his words to his ancient people, when his ministry among them was closed. "Ye shall not see me henceforth, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The Church will then be widowed no longer. The cry will have been heard and answered, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." The restitution of all things will have begun; and the heavens shall no longer detain the Lord Jesus. The Redeemer will have come from Zion, and will have turned away ungodliness from Jacob. All those glorious promises of the elder prophets will be faithfully and exactly accomplished. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He will appear in his glory." "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo, I come, and will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord." "The name of the city from that day shall be, the Lord is there." "The Lord my God shall come, and all His saints. . . . And every

one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year, to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts." And then, also, in the exultation of holy joy, the message will be proclaimed to Israel, "Cry out, and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

With the Lord of glory himself, His holy apostles will then be present also. Theirs will be the highest places in glory, and nearest to the Supreme King. Twice has this promise been sealed to them by his own lips. "Ye which have followed me,—in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me: that ye may eat and drink with me at my table in my kingdom, and sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And the same truth had been announced, though less plainly, by the evangelical prophet; when, after the overthrow of the great oppressor, he proclaims to the Church, "Behold! a King shall reign in righteousness; and princes shall rule in judgment." A like distinction of pre-eminent glory is implied in the latest vision of God's word. "The walls of the city had twelve foundations; and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

But not the apostles only will share in this dominion: all they that fear God, both small and great, shall then receive their reward. "The kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." So also the prophet Zechariah, in words which refer clearly to the same time, gives the distinct announcement, "the Lord my God shall come and all his saints with thee." All the other statements of Scripture are in harmony with this declaration, and teach us that all "they who are Christ's" shall be

raised "at his coming," and be partakers in the glory of his eternal kingdom.

But in this dominion of the Son of Man there will not only be the saints of the resurrection, who take the kingdom and possess it for ever; there will also be the subjects over whom they will exercise their rule. First among these will be the nation of redeemed Israel. To them the promise is given, by the mouth of St. Peter, that on their national repentance the Lord Jesus shall be sent unto them from heaven (Acts iii. 19—21). In that hour of contrition the words will be fulfilled, spoken to them, as a parting voice, by our Lord himself, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Then too that conversion will be accomplished which found its pattern and type in the great Apostle; "They shall look on me whom they have pierced; and shall mourn for him as one that mourneth for an only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." (Zech. xii. 10.) The words of Gabriel, and the song of the aged Simeon, will begin to be fully verified. The Son of David "shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever," and after he has been for ages "the light of the Gentiles," will thus become conspicuously "the glory of his people Israel."

Other passages, even in the New Testament, reveal the same truth. It is when "the Redeemer shall come from Zion" that "all Israel will be saved," and the new covenant be nationally fulfilled in the removal of all their sins. And before the Jewish song of Hallelujah resounds in the Church (Rev. xix.), the warning voice has been uttered by our Lord, "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that watcheth."

In the Old Testament, statements of the same connexion abound. In Isaiah alone there are about twenty-five distinct prophecies of Israel's final restoration, and in more than half of these it is introduced by some clear prediction of the coming of the Lord in judgment. It is after the promise that "the Redeemer shall come to

Zion" with all the terror and solemnity of judgment, that the voice is addressed to her, "Arise and shine; for thy light is come." And not until then does the Spirit reveal that glorious promise, "Thy people shall all be righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

But, along with redeemed Israel, a remnant of all other nations shall be spared, and partake in the new dispensation of righteousness. When the chaff of the great image shall have been swept away, an ample space will be left for new and holier polities to spread themselves through the world. The remnant, however small it may be, compared with the world's present population, will rapidly increase, and will people afresh with thronging families the remotest corners of the earth. These nations, unlike the chosen people, will remain till the close of the millennium, exposed to the temptations of sin and unbelief, though preserved for a time from the added violence of Satanic delusion. Multitudes will bow with holy sincerity to the sceptre of righteousness, but numbers also will yield a feigned obedience. After a season of forbearance toward these, for a little moment the deceiver will be suffered to display his power. The last confederacy of evil will then be overthrown, and thenceforward the redemption will be complete. The earth will be peopled only by the nations of the saved, who shall walk in the light which beams from the heavenly city, until they are prepared, in successive generations, to dwell within its holy gates for ever and ever.

It would be long to adduce all the testimonies of the prophets to the width and vastness of this predicted kingdom. "The Gentiles shall come from the ends of the earth" to proclaim their repentance, and confess the vanity of their fathers. (Jer. xvi. 19.) "In that day Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the Lord; and all nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; and they shall walk no more in the imagination of their evil hearts." (Jer. iii. 17.) "They

shall not hurt nor destroy in all the holy mountain" of God, for "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah xi. 9.) To Zion it is promised, "The nation or kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, that nation shall be utterly wasted." (Isa. lx. 12.) "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." (Isa. xxvii. 6.) Samaria and Sodom shall be given for sisters to Zion, though not by the same covenant (Ez. xvi. 61), and Israel shall be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth. (Isa. xix. 24.) And along with these rich and varied blessings of peace and righteousness, spread through all the nations, the beauty of Paradise itself shall be restored to the lower world. "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places: He will make her wilderness as Eden, and her desert as the garden of the Lord: joy and gladness shall be found therein; thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." (Isa. li. 3.) "Then the Gentiles shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that which was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it." (Ezra xxxvi. 36.)

Such are the main outlines of this future kingdom of our Lord, as they are revealed in the sure word of prophecy. To unfold them completely, it would be needful to transcribe a large part of the sacred predictions, from Isaiah to Malachi. To remove the various doubts or difficulties which at first sight may appear to arise, it would be further necessary to enter on a wide survey of the Divine dispensations, and of the deeper mysteries of revealed truth. Only by such a review could the entire harmony of this kingdom with the spiritual aspects of the Gospel be fully explained and confirmed. But the few remarks already offered, when joined with the reasoning and evidence of the previous chapters, may suffice to establish the general doctrine, and to shew how deeply it is rooted in the testimony of the word of God. They will thus supply, to those who follow, without bias, the teaching of the word of pro-

phecy, a firm basis of enlightened hope, and a joyful expectation of the good things to come. We may now turn to those practical lessons, which the hope of this kingdom supplies abundantly to the Church of God.

I. And first, we are taught afresh, by the closing part of these visions, THE INTENSE REALITY OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE HERE BELOW. This truth, indeed, has beamed on us, with a steady light, from every part of these sacred prophecies. When we behold the rise, the dominion, and the fall of Babylon, Persia, Macedon, and Rome, so clearly pourtrayed, we are forced to the deep conviction, that "there is a God that judgeth in the earth." But the same truth appears, with still more impressive lustre, from the promise of this future kingdom. When we look on some finished piece of costly workmanship, some noble sculpture or beautiful work of art, we feel how close and unremitting must have been the attention of the artist by whom it has been brought at length to such perfection. The busy hand and the discerning eye must alike have been employed on it, in every previous stage, or never could art have achieved such an admirable triumph, nor the rude materials have been fashioned into such perfect beauty. So is it with the Providence of God to our fallen world. Once let us receive the promise, with a simple faith, that the earth shall be redeemed and all things restored, that the Son of man, with the saints of the Most High, shall take the kingdom over the whole heaven, and possess the kingdom for ever—and a flood of divine light is thrown backward on the whole range of history. Let us conceive that some blessed angel was permitted to gaze beforehand on Creation, as it stood revealed in its beauty on the first Sabbath in Paradise, and then returned to watch the steps in its progress, when the Spirit of God was moving on the face of the waters. With what an accession of deep and wondering interest would he now watch these Divine operations! Each wave of the abyss would now seem a prophecy of the beauty and

life to spring shortly from its bosom. He would feel that no floating atom, no surge of the dark abyss, was exempt from the control of that Wisdom, which was working, with steady progress, to evoke from it all the coming grandeur of the new-created world.

Now in the same spirit will the Christian, when once he has realized the promise here given, look upon all the various and complicated events of the present time. They are only the scaffolding to a structure still incomplete, but which far surpasses the highest efforts of the imagination in its divine and eternal beauty. Nothing can be unmeaning, nothing without a secret purpose, in that world where Immanuel is hereafter to reign; and over which the heavens shall be opened, and the angels of God be seen descending upon the Son of man. Every event will now assume a new dignity from its connexion with the coming restitution. Never for one moment can the eye of God's Spirit be averted from that world, which he is preparing for such a triumph of love, and for the scene of such an everlasting dominion. Every part of the earth will have yielded some of its sojourners, to swell the number of those who will then reign with their Lord. Every year, as it passes by, will have seen accomplished its own share in that mysterious work, which is preparing our earth for this future consummation. Our thoughts are thus led, every moment, to realize the hand of God in all things, and to feel ever encircled by the tokens of His supreme and ceaseless dominion.

Viewed in this light, the words of our Lord in the sermon on the Mount receive a fresh emphasis; and the contrast which they contain opens out into an unsuspected harmony of truth. "Neither swear by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black." No two allusions would seem at first sight, more alien and remote from each other; but, when unfolded by the light of these visions, the harmony between them will evidently appear. In the

kingdom of the Son of man, "Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the Lord." Repaired from its long desolation, it will then be the metropolis of a ransomed world, the centre and seat of a pure and holy dominion. "It shall not be plucked up nor thrown down, from henceforth even for ever." "The name of the city from that day shall be, the Lord is there." "The sun shall be ashamed, and the moon confounded, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." How will this title given by our Lord himself, amidst his most spiritual messages, "the city of the great King"—then shine forth as with supernatural brightness! An oath by that sacred name will then appear evidently to involve a direct appeal to God himself, all whose attributes will be wondrously displayed in the destinies of Zion, when He shall have made the place of his feet glorious.

But while the name of God will be signally manifest in "the city of the great King," when, according to the promise, He shall "extend peace to her as a river, and the glory of the Gentiles as a flowing stream," it is revealed as truly, though less conspicuously, in all the steps of Providence which have led the way to that final triumph. The minutest events of this present time are secretly linked, in His all-wise counsels, with the glory which shall then be revealed. "Neither shalt thou swear by thy head; for thou canst not make one hair white or black." Why should an object so trivial be joined here with that august and magnificent hope, implied in the words—"the city of the great King?" To remind us that all Providence, in every jot and tittle however minute, is a prophecy of that full redemption to come. One verse supplies a telescope, the other a microscope, to the hand of faith; but the mysteries which each of them reveals are only various parts of the same plan. God in his infinite wisdom is directing all things, even the least, towards that joyful consummation. The falling sparrow, the leaves of the forest, the secret thoughts and projects of the millions of man-

kind, and the minutest changes of their personal history, in body or in soul,—all are so many links in the execution of His unfathomable counsels. And as the architect or artist keeps ever in view the great ideal at which he aims, and the place of every stone in the building, every stroke of the chisel or the pencil, however delicate or fine, is guided by this secret reference ; so also the divine Saviour, while he counts the steps of his people, or numbers the hairs of their head, keeps His eye ever fixed on that glorious kingdom, which is to be the final issue of all the changes of time. What an element of mystery and of life is thus infused into all things around us ! What a gleam of bright and heavenly sunshine does the hope of this kingdom, as revealed to us in the Scriptures, shed on all the trials and experience of Christians here below !

Such, then, will be one effect of a lively faith in this divine prophecy. The hand of God will be realized, more fully than before, in the past and present history of our fallen world. It will seem no longer a mighty maze, without plan or purpose ; that leaves our understanding bewildered, while we gaze on it, in practical atheism, as if the God of prophets and apostles had forsaken the earth. All things will be viewed with a deeper interest, as the steps, ordered from eternity, towards the future glory. We shall then look with a purer affection on the outward works of God. The taint of the fall, indeed, has passed upon them ; but they are yet to be renewed, and the traces of God's providence, and local memorials of his goodness, even after their fiery baptism, may perhaps still survive in that world to come. Our Lord himself, on the throne of his glory, retains the marks of his deepest sufferings. So also this fallen world, when redeemed from the curse, may still wear inscribed upon it, in every part, the memorials of that wonderful Providence of which it has been the theatre for so many ages. Such thoughts, which are naturally suggested by the vision, must exercise a hallowing influence over the heart of the

Christian believer. Every scene of nature and of providence will become an occasion of more close communion with the eternal God; when they are seen to be not only the channels of present grace, but also earnests and sure pledges of the kingdom of glory.

II. A second lesson which may be drawn from the close of these visions, is THE TRUE STANDARD OF NATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND HONOUR. There is a deceitful atmosphere in the present world, which magnifies what is perishable, and gilds what is corrupt. But when we gaze on these promises, the false glare of luxury and ambition dies away. The atheism which masks itself under a spiritual disguise, and absolves kings and rulers from all concern for Divine truth and the cause of Christ, stands revealed in its true deformity and foulness. In this mirror we see clearly that true excellence and dignity belongs only to the righteous nation, where God and his truth are enthroned in the willing allegiance of the subjects and their rulers; and kings and princes, while they rejoice in the ways of the Lord, devote all their influence to promote his glory in the salvation and blessedness of the souls intrusted to their charge.

The high standard of national dignity and holiness, revealed in these emblems, is opposed to three great counterfeits and delusions, which are all of them rife and prevalent in these last days. These are wealth and riches, military ambition, and cold and heartless theories of political ungodliness.

In the vision of the image, when the mystic stone descends, not only the iron and clay, but the silver and the gold, are broken to pieces together. Besides the political reference, there is plainly a great moral lesson secretly conveyed. Gold and silver, and material riches, have ever been one grand object of idolatry to the nations of the world. Especially in these last days, and in our own country, foolish theories have grown up into currency and repute, built and founded on this one

grand falsehood, that a man's life consisteth in the abundance of his possessions. Hence the rapid increase of collective wealth and collective misery; a hollow, feverish state of society, covered on its surface with the proudest triumphs of art and science, and yet nursing in its bosom all the volcanic elements of discord, oppression, hatred, and revolutionary rage. Hence that mournful spectacle—the first of Christian nations degraded into a bloody pioneer for the most mercenary and heartless of its own children; while seeking, for filthy lucre, to force poison into the heart of a mighty heathen empire—and even religion itself, stunted and dwarfed by the atmosphere of covetousness, too feeble to raise her voice above a faint whisper against the enormous evil. But one glance at the coming kingdom of righteousness will unmask the fearful delusion. Then, in the presence of the Holy One, will be seen the guilt of nations no less than of teachers, who run greedily after the error of Balaam, loving the wages of unrighteousness, and cannot bear to renounce a profitable crime. Their silver and their gold will then be broken to pieces together, and be found worthless as the miry clay: and on all the gains of oppression and fraud at home, or in the furthest East, it will then with shuddering be found written—"It is the price of blood." For as mercy is twice blessed, so is cold, merciless avarice, doubly cursed. In the present life it ruins ten thousand souls, while it makes the gospel of Christ to be blasphemed among the heathen; and it brings upon the guilty a fearful sentence of condemnation in the life to come.

How different is the prospect in the kingdom of God! When the silver and the gold, which the covetous have worshipped, are swept away like the chaff, other promises will begin to be fulfilled. "The merchandize of Tyre shall be holiness unto the Lord." The Son of David shall sit on his throne, as the friend of the poor, and the Redeemer of their souls. "He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer shall be made unto him continually, and daily shall he

be praised." All the riches and wealth of happy nations shall then be consecrated to the service of God, and be diffused in ten thousand forms of kindness and mutual charity among the families of the earth.

The delusion of military ambition and warlike glory will then also be done away. "The beast shall be destroyed and given to the burning flame." Its prowess may have been great, its armies triumphant, its victories and conquests wonderful. The whole earth may have been "trodden down" by it, and "broken in pieces." But they were the conquests, not of love, but of haughtiness and pride. They were the victories, not of goodness, but of selfish ambition. Their secret motive was the lust of dominion or the desire of vain-glory; and, in pursuit of these shadows, the living God was forgotten, His laws transgressed, and His authority despised. Therefore the culprit, with all its military greatness, is arraigned and condemned at that righteous bar, and given to the burning flame. Such is the restless spirit which threatens the peace of the world at the present hour in a neighbouring country, a spirit which rejoices in the pride of military triumphs, although the wrath of God has already visited them as with the thunderbolts of heaven. But this proud spirit of revolutionary violence shall soon perish for ever. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." A nobler ambition shall then animate the children of men; while each seeks to resemble more nearly the Lord of heaven, and to urge a more successful warfare against every form of spiritual evil. All shall then be warriors, but against pride, selfishness, and sin; and the fruit of every victory will be, not the groans of slaughtered victims, but nobler attainments of grace, and a more complete reflection in every heart of the Divine blessedness and glory.

Equally clear is the lesson which these descriptions afford, to guard the Church against national atheism, leagued with spiritual and religious democracy. Such is the doctrine which denies the lawfulness of national reli-

gion, while it sets aside all rank and gradation within the Church itself. But the hope here presented to us is widely different. When the stone has smitten the image, it becomes a great mountain. It is not the dead level of a spiritual democracy, but ordinances of royalty and righteous dominion, which will then everywhere prevail. For mountains are, in all Scripture, emblems of princes and sovereigns, who, from the height of superior power, shed their fertilizing streams on the people that rest, like quiet valleys, beneath their shade. Such will be, as revealed in this vision, the economy of Messiah's kingdom. No level monotony will be found in it, but all the ranks of a well-ordered polity. Even among the saints of the resurrection, "one star differeth from another star in glory." Variety and sovereignty are alike impressed upon all the works of God. It is only in the desert wilderness that we find an unbroken level, one monotonous waste of sand. But far different are the features of the good land of promise. The spiritual, as the natural Canaan, is "a land of hills and valleys;" and more abundantly, by this sweet interchange, "drinketh water of the rain of heaven." And when the predicted mountain shall fill the whole earth, the emblem implies that holiness and love will be dispensed, in beautiful gradation, and through righteous ordinances, from the supreme Ruler to the various tribes of sojourners in the lower world. The delusions of spiritual democracy and national atheism will have disappeared, along with tyranny and idolatrous superstition. For the saints of the Most High will then possess the kingdom, and the bare thought of ruling apart from the will and word of Christ will have passed away as a hateful dream of the kingdom of darkness.

A further lesson to be drawn from these predictions is THE DEEP AND SURPASSING INTEREST OF THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES. There is a kingdom to be established on the ransomed earth, in which the Son of

man will reign for ever. The King himself has appeared, but only for a very little season, here below. An inspired record remains, which reveals to us the thoughts, and words, and actions, during his sojourn on earth, of this everlasting King. Viewed in this connexion with the coming kingdom, what a fresh interest is thrown around every narrative, and each separate verse, of these holy Gospels! Each is a seed of eternal things. Each reveals to us some maxim of wisdom, or love, or holiness, in the heart of Him who will shortly be invested, and that visibly, with universal dominion. How vast an expansion, then, will every one of these truths receive in that kingdom of God! For the same word declares to us that "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." When the whole earth shall be receiving the law from His mouth, and shall walk in the light of His presence, every one of those gracious sentences, or actions of holy love, will be revealing more and more, through eternal ages, their secret excellence and divine beauty. Then will be seen in all its brightness, the true blessedness of the meek, the merciful, and the pure in heart. Then will He, who is now the light of the Gentiles, be also manifestly the peculiar glory of his people Israel. The heavens will then be opened, according to his promise, and the angels of God be seen ascending and descending upon the Son of man. Every miracle will be realized in its spiritual antitype; and every parable disclose some unsuspected depth of eternal wisdom. These simple records of the Lord Jesus, now despised by the proud and the worldly hearted, will yield to saints and archangels fresh themes of wondering meditation, when thousand upon thousand ages shall have rolled away. And thus the parable of our Lord will be fulfilled; the mustard-seed will have spread into a mighty tree, and will overcanopy with its delightful shadow a ransomed universe.

Our wisdom, then, must be to realize, even now, this intimate connexion between the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, and the kingdom that is to be revealed.

We may thus, by the blessing of God, be preserved from two opposite evils. There is a Judaizing and carnal tone of thought, in which the hidden glory of the cross is forgotten, and the sensible and outward elements of the Christian hope replace those, and thrust them out of the memory, which are spiritual and divine. On the other hand the Gospel itself may be turned into a mere abstraction, a string of dogmas, a dry and heartless skeleton of doctrines, from which the life has entirely passed away. But the connexion suggested by this vision is a safeguard against either danger. The prospect of the visible glory will maintain its heavenly dignity and power, when we read the prophecies in the light which beams from the cross and the resurrection of our Lord. And again, the doctrines of the Gospel will be felt as living realities, when we associate them with the visible manifestation of Messiah's kingdom. The word itself will resume its original meaning, in all its delightful freshness, as "the glad tidings of the kingdom of God." Seen in this light, it reveals to us the person and character of the great King, the maxims of His government, the character of those who sit nearest to Him in his kingdom, the depth of His agony endured out of love to rebels, the way of recovery to His favour, the assurance to every true penitent of a place and a share in His future and eternal dominion. The cross, interpreted by the coming glory, becomes a still deeper mystery of love, and appeals to the affections of the sinner with an added emphasis of Divine power. And the hope itself of that kingdom becomes more spiritual and heavenly, when we read it in the holy light of the inspired gospels, and learn to connect it with the sufferings of our incarnate Saviour. "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom." Such were the two opposite temptations in the apostolic age. The union of these two great themes of prophecy, "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that shall follow," is the divine and effectual remedy against either delusion. May we have

grace and wisdom, in these days, to use it aright! Thus we shall be preserved alike from the snare of fanatical excitement, destructive of peace and spiritual discernment; and from that speculative and abstract faith, which strips the Gospel of its true glory, and casts aside the great hope of the Church—the coming of the Lord Jesus in the clouds of heaven.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

DAN. II. 47.—"THE KING ANSWERED UNTO DANIEL AND SAID, OF A TRUTH IT IS THAT YOUR GOD IS A GOD OF GODS, AND A LORD OF KINGS, AND A REVEALER OF SECRETS, SEEING THOU COULDEST REVEAL THIS SECRET."

VIII. 28.—"HITHERTO IS THE END OF THE MATTER. AS FOR ME, DANIEL, MY COGITATIONS MUCH TROUBLED ME, AND MY COUNTENANCE CHANGED IN ME; BUT I KEPT THE MATTER IN MY HEART."

THE course of these sacred visions has now been unfolded, from its beginning to its close. The general outline of their application has first of all been defined by clear and simple proofs, confirmed by the general assent of every age of the church. The history of the three first empires, and of the fourth in its earlier stage, has been briefly described, and found to be in full agreement with the prophetic symbols. The meaning of the ten kings and of the little horn has next been submitted to a close and full examination. The application of these to the kingdoms of Western Europe, and the papacy of Rome, has been established by various proofs,—the order of the prophecy, the strict meaning of the terms, and the clear fulfilment of each separate element of the prediction. The moral difficulties supposed to lie against this exposition have also been examined, and found to supply a further argument in its favour, while some lessons of deep interest to a spiritual mind have been derived from a review of the whole history.

The vision has next conducted our thoughts from the past events of Providence to the future kingdom of God. The nature of this kingdom has been examined. Three

main principles have been confirmed by a copious induction of Scripture evidence; that the millennium is still future; that it will be followed by a renewal of the earth, still peopled by righteous generations; and that the Second Advent will precede this restitution of all things, and the whole age of promised blessedness. By the light of these main principles the remainder of the visions has now been explained, both in the dissolution of the Great Image, and the features of that kingdom of the mountain which is then to ensue.

Before, however, we part from a subject so magnificent and boundless, it seems desirable, from a review of the whole, to derive some great spiritual lessons, and thus to leaven our souls more deeply with the influence of these holy truths. And here the visions themselves will supply us with examples, and teach us the spirit in which we ought to close our historical survey. When the king of Babylon had these truths revealed to him, they produced on his mind an impression of deep reverence towards the God of heaven. "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." The power and the wisdom of the Most High were equally conspicuous in the revelation; His power, in controlling these mighty empires through their whole course for ages, and establishing his own kingdom on their ruins; and His wisdom, in revealing to his prophet, so long before, the outlines of all history for thousands of years. The effect upon Daniel himself, in the second vision, was not less deep and impressive. "He kept the matter in his heart." Deeply and earnestly did he ponder, from time to time, the truths which had been set before him, that he might enter more fully into their design, and learn the mysterious grandeur of God's eternal kingdom. Such ought to be the effect on ourselves also in the present day. The prophecy will have failed to accomplish in us its designed purpose, unless it shall lead to a deeper and humbler adoration of the Divine wisdom, and prayerful meditation on all the ways of His providence here below.

The truths which open before us, on a review of the whole prophecy, are indeed many and various. There are four which may be singled out as among the most conspicuous, and which will form, therefore, a fit and natural close to this whole inquiry. These are—the right and Christian use of all past history, the Protestant character of the true Church, the duty of a national allegiance and subjection to Christ, as the Supreme King, and the unspeakable joy and blessedness of the world to come.

I. These visions, then, of Daniel instruct us, in the first place, what is THE RIGHT AND CHRISTIAN USE OF ALL HISTORY. This is a great lesson which Christians in general have been slow to learn, and which, could we learn it thoroughly, would prove to be rich with the highest blessings to our souls.

It is true that in the present day historical studies have been revived, and are pursued by thousands with unusual ardour and zeal. A higher standard has been proposed. Writers, as well as their readers, no longer content themselves with the meagre annals which were usual in former days. They seek, with laborious diligence, to enter deeply into the spirit of past ages. Not only the memory, but the imagination and the reason are now called into lively exercise ; and all the efforts of learning are lavished in the effort to revive the forgotten and neglected scenes of earlier days. The romance of history, and its philosophy, go hand in hand. One school of historians has arisen, whose aim it is to clothe all the records of the past with the freshness of a poetical fancy ; and another, which seeks to analyze them with the research of a profound philosophy. Never were such ample materials provided, or the memorials of the past exhibited to view, insphered in such a brilliant light of genius and learning.

But, amidst this profusion of mental power, how small is the spiritual profit which has hitherto accrued to the church of God ! The course of the world has appeared

generally, even to pious Christians, a bewildering maze ; where no purpose or plan can be traced, and where the hand of God is but dimly visible, in the shifting variety of perpetual changes. Hence they have scarcely thought of looking here for any large supply of spiritual instruction. A confusion like that of the great deep, when first the Spirit of God began to move on the waters, has seemed in their eyes to rest upon the whole. Hence the study has remained, for the most part, with writers of a more worldly school of thought. These have had objects of a different kind. They have sought to realize the living scene which occupied the busy thoughts of former generations. They have viewed the study as that of an interesting play ; only more deep in its interest, because of its historical reality. They have traced the passions of the various actors, and all the shifting scenery of this wonderful drama. And thus, to their eyes, history has been clothed with all the beautiful colours of Romance ; and turned into a storehouse of inexhaustible treasures, to exercise and delight an active and refined imagination. A few there are who have had a still higher aim ; who have sought to unfold the secret springs of action, and so to derive political wisdom from the perplexing chaos of historical change. They have traced the growth of liberty, and the various phases of civilization. They have watched the dawning of science through the clouds of superstition ; and the deep fermentation of intellectual life, which, out of feudal barbarism, has evolved the triumphs of modern art, of laws, and of freedom. They have sought, from this review, to derive both instructions of wisdom, and lessons of hope, with an assurance of the world's continual progress to a higher perfection.

But how poor and empty, after all, are the results which philosophy has ever attained, in its efforts to solve this strange enigma of Divine Providence ? The school of Romance has quickened, indeed, and cultivated the fancy ; it has procured fresh amusement for triflers, and has enlarged, for sensitive minds, the sphere of their

sensibility ; but it has done little or nothing to enrich the understanding, or to renew the heart. Often, it may be feared, there has been an opposite influence. A diseased and unnatural taste has been formed ; which delights in ages of superstition, and loves to fling the colours of awe and mystery over the darkness of spiritual ignorance and delusion, or the foulest deeds of violence and blood.

And if now from poet-historians we turn to the philosophers, our disappointment will be the same. Few of them are sufficiently versed in Christian truth to understand even the first principles, which guide and control the course of Divine Providence. For the most part they are ignorant of the Fall, that master-key to the records of human life. They are ignorant of redemption, in the deep mystery of the Saviour's love and of man's perverseness which it reveals. They are ignorant of the order and mutual connexion of God's past dispensations. And further—a still more fatal defect—they have no clear discernment of that glorious kingdom of Messiah upon earth, its times, its continuance, its holiness, and its glory, which is the final issue of all the changes they are seeking to explore. Hence, with few exceptions, their philosophy is spurious, their first principles false and groundless, and their inferences are merely fuel to increase the flame of popular delusion ; to strengthen the bands of superstitious tyranny, or embolden infidelity to a fresh and more vigorous attempt to establish its own triumph on the ruins of thrones and altars, and even of the supremacy of God himself. And hence almost the sole lesson which the philosophic historians of the continent profess to derive from their researches, is the sure triumph of democracy in every land ; and the gradual progress of the world towards perfection, by the strength of the human will, not by the victorious triumph of supernatural grace.

Now, in contrast to all these abortive efforts, the present visions afford us a Divine key to unlock those secrets of Divine providence which are impenetrable to

all the attempts of mere human science. The great outlines, not only of the past, but of the future also, are here pourtrayed. Every event of time is thus turned into a sacramental pledge of God's presence, and of the ceaseless oversight which He exercises over all human affairs. Beside the general outline, the moral features of each successive empire are also revealed. By a few vivid strokes, the Divine Spirit sets before us those great truths, which philosophy, immersed in the mists of worldliness, can never attain. He reveals to us moral deformity, where a worldly eye sees only dazzling splendour; and where the superstitious behold a beautiful ceremonial, with all sweet sounds of music, and all the graces of art, adoring a religion of royal state and mystery, He discloses to us a hateful idolatry, offensive to God, and ruinous to the souls of men. But this humbling view of the past is not given to create a gloomy and hopeless despondency. It is revealed to us that it may illustrate, by a brighter contrast, the blessings which are in store for our fallen world. A mightier power, and a deeper wisdom, than that of human philosophy, are at work for its redemption. The Son of God, who, as the mystic stone, was supernaturally incarnate of the Virgin, will also, by a supernatural work of Divine power, complete His great purpose of love, and restore our lost planet to the family of heaven.

The later prophecies of the New Testament fill up with an ampler detail the outline of these two visions, and supply still further and fuller light in illustration of God's wonderful providence. But even the three maxims named already, and which result from the most general survey of these visions, are rich in spiritual instruction to every Christian mind. They are the first elements in all the philosophy of history that deserves the name. Unlike the dreams of the infidel theorist, they light up the secret depths of the heart of man, while they anchor our hopes on the covenant of God.

Read in the light drawn from these prophecies, how rich and various a field of thought will the history of

the world open before the eye of the Christian! For now he can realize the presence of God amidst all its changes. Babylon, and Persia, Greece and Rome; the conquests of Cæsar, the downfall of Augustulus; the Gothic devastations, the times of feudal anarchy, and all the changing alliances of later times, are now seen to lie open under the eye of God, and to be the steps foreappointed, by His wisdom, to prepare the way for his own blessed kingdom. A new source of interest now enters into every record of the past. We feel and know that here the most high God has been working out a part of his own counsels. We feel it, not with the cold assent extorted by an abstract doctrine we dare not deny—but with the lively conviction paid to a truth, of which the evidence is before our eyes. Here is Rome, the head of the fourth empire, still in being, and still the centre of a power ceaseless in its activity, and unbounded in its claims. Here are still the divided kingdoms of the West, with their perpetual variety of alliance and intermarriage, and with a jealous rivalry of independent power, not less perpetual and unchanging. The landscape revealed by the Holy Spirit twenty-five centuries ago, in the court of Babylon, has risen into being, and answers in every part, to the protraiture which He had drawn. And hence we gather, with a full assurance of faith, the lesson taught the proud monarch in the hour of his abasement, that "the Most High is ruling amidst the kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whomsoever He will."

And how does this one truth grow into deeper interest when the Christian learns to unite it with the other truths of the same word! He who is thus present, and ordering all things around us, is the living God, the Creator of all things, and for whose pleasure they are and were created. He who rules amidst the kingdoms of men, is the God of Abraham, who still to the latest age remembers His covenant, and looks with compassionate love on His outcast and rebellious people. The presence which meets us, wherever we turn, in the page

of Grecian or Roman history, is the presence of that Son of God who bare the sins of men in His own body on the tree. And thus, as we meditate on the words of the vision, we may rise into the delightful assurance that love, holy love, is around us on every side. The thought of our Christian poet is beautiful, and beautifully expressed, that the presence of Christ may be seen in all the works of nature, and that there is no flower

> 'But shews some touch, in freckle, streak, or vein,'

which marks the unrivalled pencil of that Saviour who was crowned with thorns for our redemption. But these visions lead us to a higher attainment, and teach us a still harder lesson. They enable us to realize the presence of redeeming Love, not merely in the scenes of natural beauty, but in the artificial scenes of courts and senates, amidst the horrors of war and bloodshed, and through ages darkened with anarchy, violence, and crime. All are parts in this sure counsel of the Most High. The Son of God presides over the whole, and while he causes the wrath of man to praise him, is hasting, amidst the seeming confusion, his own kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy.

The second main truth which these visions disclose is not less important to the Christian, as a key to the right use of all his researches into history. There is a constant tendency in the heart to sink to the level of those examples and maxims which are most frequently in view. All history thus partakes, in some degree, of the character which the apostle ascribes to the word of God. It is a mirror which, while we gaze into it, changes us gradually into the likeness of the objects it reveals. The warrior inflames there his military ardour, while he traces the campaigns of Alexander, or Hannibal, or Cæsar; and, like Trajan, kindles at the sight with a dangerous emulation, destructive to the peace of other ages. The poet awakens all the energies of his slumbering powers, while he muses on the fame, or the writings, of all the great masters of song. Every

age of history, when made the object of continual study, has a surprising power to stamp the mind with its own image, and to transfuse its own spirit, whether warlike or luxurious, whether romantic or refined, into the bosom of the reader. And if it be true, alas, that the prevailing tone of thought has always been evil, it is evident that a great and serious danger must ensue.

But here, again, the prophecy interposes its shield; and, like Elisha's cruse, turns the very source of infection into a wholesome fountain of Divine and spiritual wisdom. For here we learn to look upon history in the light of heaven. The deceptive veil of sophistry or worldly expedience is torn away. The corruption of man is seen in its true light, and illustrates more brightly the grace and long-suffering of God. The conquests, which awakened before a sinful emulation, are now disenchanted, and become only the ravening of a beast of prey. The physical, the merely intellectual, becomes nothing; the moral, the spiritual, becomes everything in our view. The religion of pomp and splendour, though graced by architecture, and music, and royalty, and popular acclamation, if love and holiness be wanting, is seen to be only a refined idolatry, that will lead on quickly to persecution and open ungodliness. The past is stripped of its false and deceitful colouring; that our thoughts may rest, with more earnest longing of desire, on the true and undeceitful glory of Messiah's kingdom.

Clothed in the armour which this truth supplies to him, the Christian will be shielded from delusion on the right hand and on the left. When the spirit of superstition would revive its pretensions, and entangle him in a thick cloud of ecclesiastical forms and shadows, he will gaze here on the inspired record, and forbear to look for his standard or search for his authorities, in those ages which saw the predicted rise of the apostasy, and the first triumphs of the little horn. When a liberal philosophy, falsely so called, would allure him with its specious, but infidel boasting, and lead him to look for the world's regeneration by the triumphs of the popular

will, he will consult these faithful oracles once more, and be undeceived. Here he will learn that, even till the last vial of judgment, rebellion and ungodliness will abound ; and that it is not by the triumph of a godless liberty, but by its final overthrow, and sore judgment on the rebellious, that truth and righteousness will at length prevail in the earth. And thus in the conflict of principles, which every day becomes more intense, he will find these holy prophecies to be "the armour of righteousness on the right and on the left," to shield him from opposite dangers, and preserve him in the straight path of Christian integrity and wisdom.

But, most of all, these visions will aid us in the right improvement of all history, by infusing a new element of hope and joy. "The stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." "The saints shall possess the kingdom for ever and ever." Here, in few words, the final issue of the whole drama of Providence is clearly revealed. And how delightful is the prospect—righteousness, peace, and joy, triumphant over sin, universally diffused, immortal and everlasting !

Now it is plain that a hope like this, distinctly and firmly realized, will shed an influence backward on the whole range of past history. The Christian will now see that the providence of God, like the Divine law, is a shadow of good things to come. Whatever he finds in its whole course, pure, lovely, and of good report, he will carefully sever in thought from the surrounding evil, and cherish it as a grateful earnest of the future blessing. If his eye rests on bright examples of holy zeal, and self-denying affection, on the patience of martyrs, or the zeal of apostles, or quiet and tender forms of domestic love, he will use them to raise his conceptions of that world to come, where all these separate rills of joy and holiness shall meet together ; where every Christian grace shall be fully expanded, and earth and heaven shall be blended in one delightful fellowship of love, and that for ever.

Such, then, will be the lessons on the use of history

which the Christian will derive from these visions, and such the spirit in which they will lead him to meditation on all the past. Everywhere they will reveal to him the Almighty God, controlling, directing, and overruling all things by the word of His power. Everywhere they will be present with him as a Divine antidote to the spirit of the world ; will reveal its unsuspected corruptions, and unmask all the delusive semblances and shows of earthly greatness. In the view of each past event, they will animate him afresh to hope and prayer. They will teach him to see, in every form of evil, a shadow that will soon disappear ; and, in every form of truth and holiness, a seed that will presently blossom into eternal beauty in the kingdom of God.

II. The Protestant character of the true Church is a further lesson which results evidently from these prophecies. The one great evil they reveal, in these latter times, is the reign of the little horn, and his boastful words against the Most High. It has been proved, by many clear marks, that this power denotes the Roman papacy. And surely the inference must be plain ; that we ought to watch, both as Christians and as citizens, against the first approach of so great an evil, and should flee, as if from a serpent, from every taint of Romish superstition.

This general warning might be viewed in three aspects, and each alone would need a volume for its full development. It affects the Christian in his relations to the state of which he is a citizen, to the church of which he is a member, and in the secret work of religion in the heart. One or two remarks on each of these aspects are all that can be offered here.

But, first, a caution seems needful to remove a prejudice that lies in the way. The application of these prophecies as a weapon against Papal corruptions appears to be more than ever in disrepute, and has been assailed latterly, even by nominal Protestants, with peculiar vehemence. One reason, doubtless, has been

its actual abuse by mere partizans, without Christian love or tenderness of conscience in their coarse denunciations of error. Even the first Reformers, with all their faithful zeal, were exposed to the mixture of human infirmity, and a false fire sometimes is mingled with their testimony. But this became still more true of their successors. The great conflict often degenerated into a political or national feud, a strife of contending factions. No wonder, then, that carnal minds should abuse a weapon of warfare so powerful as this, and bring the truth itself into discredit, so as to pave the way, in many instances, for a ruinous and fatal reaction. To use these prophecies aright in the Protestant controversy, we need, therefore, to impose on ourselves a triple restraint. We must use them *honestly;* from a deep, serious, and deliberate persuasion, that such is their true meaning, and not merely from a strong impression how effective they will be in maintaining a favourite cause. We must use them *impartially*, receiving with equal readiness whatever warnings they supply against the lawless spirit of the last days. And above all we must use them with *tenderness*, and in the spirit of real love; mourning for the sins of others as if for our own, and humbling ourselves, with deep reverence, at the warnings of God's holy word. For if these prophetic warnings be handled deceitfully, or in a fiery and heartless zeal, doubtless the threatening will apply to such Protestant zealots.—"With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again."

On the other hand, those who believe firmly, after their most diligent and patient search, that these prophecies really refer to the Papal tyranny, must feel that it is no light sin, under whatever pretext, to deprive the Church of this Divine safeguard. One sin or the other we cannot avoid, if we interpret this prophecy amiss. Either we became false witnesses against our fellow Christians, or else we abrogate and annul the gracious warnings of the Spirit of God. It is idle, then,

to complain that such interpretations infuse bitterness into religious controversy. The bitterness is already there, so long as the kingdom of darkness continues in the world. The simple question must be, what is the truth of God, the real meaning of the Holy Ghost? And if the truth be most solemn, this is no reason why it should be kept back or concealed; but rather why it should be fully proclaimed. Only it must be with a serious, tender, humble spirit; lest the truth itself be made odious, when taken up by lips that are full of bitterness and pride.

The warning, then, of the prophecy applies to us, as British citizens, at the present day. Long sheltered by the providence of God behind the bulwarks erected by our fathers, the Protestants of our land had come to regard the Papacy as an antiquated and powerless thing. They have now begun to be undeceived, or deceived doubly, by embracing what before they had despised. The political barriers have been removed, almost entirely; the ecclesiastical are shaking in their turn; and a road, "smooth, easy, inoffensive," seems to be preparing by the great enemy, by which we may reunite with the apostasy we seemed to have forsaken for ever. So that now, among our statesmen, there are those who account themselves sturdy Protestants, while they bargain for a half chance of being in the right, and account all certain assurance in matters of faith to be a dangerous contradiction to the spirit of freedom. With such maxims, and such a slippery faith, what can we expect but that our country, by slow degrees, will be sucked into the terrible whirlpool, of delusion first, and afterwards of Divine judgment?

One most powerful means to deliver us from this fearful danger, if deliverance be yet possible, would be the careful study of this Divine prophecy. It is the means which God himself has specially provided. Other predictions of the New Testament supply a fuller detail and variety of cautionary truths. But here the main lesson stands out in broad relief, clear and conspicuous,

so as might arrest the attention even of mere statesmen, if not totally blind. It is plain at what time the Roman empire was broken into many fragments. It is plain what potentate then rose stealthily into power, diverse from all the rest, and usurped and exercised dominion over the whole. It is evident, on the merest glance at history, what power has used great and boastful words, beyond all precedent, to advance its authority. Therefore it is plain also of what power the God of heaven commands His people to beware, and what power it is from whose fatal and paralyzing touch a Christian statesman will seek to preserve the land of his birth. To endow Popery once more, in a land that has been rescued from its yoke, is a madness little short of direct high treason against heaven.

And how, then, shall we be delivered from the counsels of a godless expediency, time-serving, and changing with every wind, and careless alike of God's promise and His threatening? By a heedful attention to the warning of the vision. There we see that the Papacy in its tyranny, its blasphemous pretensions, and its bitter persecutions, is marked out by the God of heaven as the enemy of national peace, and the procuring cause of national judgments. For here the evils, elsewhere dispersed and scattered, unite under one head, form one compact system, and embody themselves into one organized confederacy to trample down, and hide out from the world, the truth of God, and the salvation of the Lord Jesus. There may be, and alas, there are, abounding evils and crimes even in Protestant lands. But these are dangerous to their welfare, because they predispose them to link themselves afresh with the centre and seat of the rebellion. The infidelity which seems to reject all national religion, the formality which would exchange the kernel of truth for the husk of ceremonies, become politically fatal, because they lead us back into the embrace of this grand delusion, and thus they involve us in its predicted judgment. All other national sins are punished by this one

sin to which they lead the way, a blind surrender once more, after the experience of ages, to the Papal tyranny. But this one sin is reserved itself for a direct and immediate judgment. "I beheld, because of the great words which the horn spake, I beheld till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Blasphemies, unrepealed, and by its pretence to infallibility, unrepealable, are written on the brow of Papal Rome. The nations which league with her involve themselves in a share of her guilt; and God, even the Most High God, will compel them also to share in her judgments.

For let us consider for a moment what would be implied in a revived supremacy of Popery at the present day. All its ordinances against heresy and its statutes of persecution remain unchanged. And their temporary disuse, the result of judgments without, not of repentance within, would serve only to whet the appetite for vengeance. The seeming triumph would be taken as a pledge of entire success, and be attended by the rise of a fierce and fanatic zeal. So that the smouldering flame of persecution would blaze with a double violence, and the little horn, even at the last, make itself drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Who can view such a scene as even possible, nay perhaps near at hand, and not long to preserve his country from so fearful a sin, and its attendant judgments? *

But the subject affects us, even still more nearly, as members of the visible Church. It cannot surprise us

* These remarks have been left in their original form. The events now passing are a painful confirmation of their truth; and show the mournful blindness to which statesmen are given up, in God's righteous anger, when they reject the lessons and warnings of His word. He who sits in the heavens takes delight in confounding such schemes of ungodliness, and brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent, when they would secure that peace which He only can bestow, by promoting what He has condemned. And thus we shall see before long, if this measure become law, the scheme of fancied conciliation will become God's engine for shaking our empire in pieces, for purifying His church, and hastening on the predicted judgments.

that statesmen should grow dim-sighted to the impending evil, if the Church is infected with the plague, and the light itself is turned into darkness. Yet such is the danger that besets us at this very hour. And no full remedy can be found for this evil also, but a humble, patient meditation on these words of prophecy.

Here, indeed, is one mark on the Church principles, so called, which some would revive at the present hour, that most plainly brands them as involving a spirit of delusion. Their admirers and champions shrink from the sure word of prophecy. It seems their object to impress on the Church, not how much, but how little, is to be learned from its page. This alone might prove them unfit to guide the Church of Christ aright in the hour of danger. A pilot, who should seek to persuade the mariners that all charts and observations were useless, until the vessel was in sight of the harbour, would be thought an impostor or a madman; and well would it be if the vessel, under such guidance, were to escape shipwreck long before it had reached its haven. Very similar is the case of those who maintain that prophecy reveals nothing to the Church, save the events of three or four years just before the Second Advent. The light is thus quenched which God himself has provided, and what wonder if both teachers and disciples stumble in thick darkness?

A lively faith in this one prophecy of Daniel, will be a sure bulwark against these ecclesiastical delusions. Once let us realize the true meaning of the Little Horn, and the whole structure of mere ceremonial religion, like the walls of Jericho, falls in a moment. This truth is like a powerful medicine, applied by a wise physician to the seat of the disease. The sacraments were duly administered in their outward form; ordination conferred in canonical succession; church authority went on increasing; and the goodly building of traditional Christianity grew to its full height, more imposing in worldly grandeur at every stage. And behold, when these principles have achieved their full triumph, and

have developed themselves in perfect manhood, the whole fabric is found to answer, in every jot and tittle, to the hateful and accursed dominion of the little horn. An antidote is thus provided to resist the first inroads of the evil. Its dangerous tendencies are clearly exposed. The church is warned, as with a voice from heaven, to beware of this blind dependence on outward forms, and to aim at the power and life of inward holiness ; without which holy sacraments become hideous mockeries, and the perfection of Church order a prelude for the tyranny of hell.

Ignorance of church history, it has been said, is the great source of religious controversy. And in one sense this may be true, though in a sense widely different from that which was designed. When church history is read without any other guide than the various predilections and tastes of the reader, instead of healing controversies, its tendency will be to multiply them a hundred fold. But the history of the church, read in the light of the prophecies, would indeed be a cure for many and dangerous errors. For then we should see God's own sentence passed on the various ages of the church, their spiritual features unveiled, the steps of apostasy, the times of partial revival, foreshewn ; and a clear and steady light reflected on those changes where the spirit would otherwise lose itself in its own devious wanderings. This is eminently true of the New Testament prophecies, but the remark applies even to this simpler vision. Those who follow its plain teaching could never be guilty of the sin or folly of depending, for their main standards of discipline and practice, on that very age which witnessed the fall of the fourth empire, and the first budding of the predicted Little Horn.

But the lesson to be drawn from the prophecy applies, with equal power, in the more secret experience of the Christian life. For neither laxity and indifference to Divine truth in the state, nor Romish principles in the church, could arise to trouble us, unless there were a deeper form of the evil at work within the heart. That

secret evil is the spirit of unbelief as opposed to faith, the tendency to rest on human authority in religion, in contrast with divine. Man shrinks, in his fallen state, from direct intercourse with his Maker. He shrinks from the supreme authority which divine truth, clearly seen, maintains over the conscience. He loves to shelter himself in an atmosphere of doubt, a maze of uncertain opinions. It matters not whether those opinions are loosely formed for himself, or, as a still easier course, taken on trust from others. It is enough that they be opinions merely, not direct, immediate, and living convictions, based on the authority of God alone. He is willing even to set them up as idols, and to fight for them with a bigot zeal; if he may only be suffered to retain his secret unbelief, and be relieved from the authority of the truth, forced on his own conscience by the Spirit with the very light of heaven. Thus incredulity and blind servility to man form a secret compact, by which each strengthens its own dominion. And thus all the reasonings of those who strain ecclesiastical authority to its highest pitch are infidel reasonings at heart. They are based on the darkness of the Scriptures, and the uncertainty of truth. They treat its discovery as a matter of chance; and the doctrines of God's word as matters of chance also. Therefore the only way of quieting the conscience in such an atmosphere of doubt, and where salvation is at stake, is to repose blindly, and with implicit faith, on the authority of the church; and to settle for ourselves, blindly and at a venture, where that authority must reside.

Such is the deep and secret nature of the evil, as it affects the inward experience of the Christian. The remedy must correspond, and it is fully supplied by this and similar prophecies. The blind subjection to human authority is here swept away; for it is this very subjection by which the kingdom of antichrist grows up to maturity in the church of God. But not only is the authority of the church brought down to its just level, but the authority of God himself is brought

nearer, and made to apply with a closer and deeper power.

We have here the mind of God revealed to us, not merely in abstract truths delivered long ago, but in His express judgment on the various ages of the church down to the present day, and on the principles and maxims which have successively prevailed. From such a judgment, once clearly apprehended, there can be no appeal. The authority of man is mute and silent in presence of the supreme Judge, and the very delusions which would else distract our faith are turned into the means of its surer confirmation.

It is true that this part of Divine truth, when severed from the rest, may lead in its turn to serious evils. Among these mysterious predictions, an unbridled fancy may sport itself to its own hurt ; and a spirit of rash judgment may be cherished, most injurious to real humility and Christian love. But the remedy is not to neglect these prophecies, but to combine their lessons with other and contrasted truths. Seen in their true harmony, they will not tempt us to dishonour or slight those authorities which God has, in express terms, commanded us to honour and revere ; but only to temper obedience with caution, and submission with faithfulness ; to mark, with a jealous care, the first step towards a blind and servile idolatry ; and, as St. Paul withstood Peter himself to the face, to stand fast in the liberty of Christ, and refuse to be entangled with a yoke of anti-christian bondage.

III. The duty of a national allegiance to Christ is another practical truth which shines, with a clear evidence, in this whole prophecy. The three inspired narratives interposed between the two visions all centre alike in this one doctrine, and illustrate its infinite importance to the kings and rulers of the earth.

This truth has indeed, in our own times, been assaulted with peculiar vehemence. Partly from the actual abuses of power, professedly used in the cause of

religion, and partly from the worldliness and infidelity of the age, the simple evidence of this great duty has been obscured from the eyes of many real Christians. It seems therefore doubly important to shew how full and distinct is the testimony of God's Spirit, as derived from the whole scope and range of the present visions.

The whole range, then, of providence, is here divided into two parts, the past history of the four empires and the Little Horn, and the future dominion of the saints of God. The former is marked by sin, the latter by holiness; the former is reserved for judgment, the latter is destined to continue in eternal peace. Now what is the one moral contrast on which all these momentous issues depend? Clearly it is a contrast between the exercise of regal power by the rulers of the four empires and of the saints in Messiah's kingdom. In the former case its exercise is worldly, superstitious, and corrupt; occupied mainly in the patronage of idolatry and persecution of the truth. In the latter, authority is used simply and immediately for the glory of Christ, and with a view to the spiritual welfare and salvation of immortal souls. Between these there can be no real medium. "He that is not for me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." The contrast is the same as between Nebuchadnezzar in his pride, and after he had come to a sorrowful repentance.

The practical lesson, therefore, from each part of this mighty range of Providence, is one and the same. The truth appears in a negative and positive form. The one evil which brings down judgment on each of the four empires is the rebellion of their rulers against the truth of God, their patronage of vile idolatry, and persecution of His people. The one pledge of perfect righteousness and peace in the future kingdom, is that the saints who reign have every thought led captive to the obedience of Christ, and seek in every action of their government to glorify their Lord, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the subject nations. In the sight of this Divine contrast, how meagre, how miserable is the theory of a bare

neutrality, in which the claims of Satan and of God shall be weighed in an even scale, and rulers shall hold the balance trembling in exact suspence between Christ and Antichrist. And what province is then left them to discharge? To promote the worldly interests of their subjects? If in those worldly interests Christ be shut out, they are the interests of Satan, the mists by which he blinds the children of this world to those interests which are eternal. If in those interests Christ be sought and honoured, and rulers and subjects have respect to His revealed will, the neutrality is at an end, and the whole question in debate is virtually conceded. Or is the object to be the mere outward administration of justice? If administered on grounds of mere expediency, to the exclusion of higher motives, every act of pretended justice is an usurpation; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, to me belongeth recompense, saith the Lord." If administered aright, then it must be based on the laws of God, and directed by a view to His sovereign will. Neutrality is impossible in its very nature. The degree of truth recognized by rulers may sink very low. But once let the proposed separation be complete, and the result must be a short and hideous triumph of national atheism, to be followed either by a relapse into superstitious blindness, or else by a speedy and just infliction of Divine vengeance on such a monstrous confederacy of open ungodliness.

The Christian, then, who has patiently weighed these prophecies, will never be led astray by this Antichristian delusion, under whatever spiritual pretences it may be veiled. Whoever may be the deceived, many of them possibly true and devoted servants of Christ, the Deceiver will be plain to his view; even the same whose devices will shortly be exposed, and who shall be shut up in the pit that he may deceive the nations no longer, either by perverting the gospel of peace into idolatry and persecution, or by casting entirely away from their counsels the word and the truth of God.

This political Atheism is one of the two main evils by

which the church of Christ in our own country is now assailed. And our chief remedy against its fatal inroads would be a constant meditation on that kingdom of Christ which is at hand. "The greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." The twelve apostles according to the promise of their Lord, "shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Let us apply in thought for a few moments the principle of national neutrality, and how monstrous will it appear! The holy apostles, full of Divine love, enriched with the holiness of heaven, and glowing with zeal for the glory of the Saviour, enter upon their appointed work of judgment. And the task prescribed them is, to be utterly silent concerning their Lord, to make no allusion to his will; to collate diligently all the errors and delusions which Satan may ever have invented in this fallen world, and then, in their royal dominion, to hold the balance, with nice and exact impartiality, between these various abominations and the truth of the living God. This is the ideal of perfect government at which the saints in glory, obeying the maxims of deluded saints here below, are diligently to aim, and for so high and holy a consummation are to sit on royal thrones, judging the nations of the earth. What a miserable and senseless delusion! How would the holy apostles spurn from them the unworthy office! How will they rejoice, in glory as in suffering, to hallow every action by the word of Christ, and exercise their royal dignity solely in the name of their Lord, to promote the salvation of men, and magnify the Divine majesty of their exalted Saviour!

Such, then, by the sure testimony of these visions, is the final pattern of righteous government here below. Every step, therefore, towards this high standard, is a step towards happiness and peace; every deviation leads in the downward road of misery and ruin. Whether rulers lend their sanction to the open worship of saints and images; or, by renouncing the truth of

Christ, and legislating for mere worldly gain, set a national example of that covetousness which also is idolatry ; they undermine the tenure of their own authority, rebel against the Prince whose subjects they are, and expose the nation, without repentance, to a speedy and fearful ruin.

On the other hand, how beautifully simple and clear is the duty which these visions reveal as the right and just exercise of royal power! The difficulty may be great, at the present time, of even a distant approach to the Divine pattern; but the standard of duty, in itself, is most clear. Such as will be the spirit of the glorified saints and apostles hereafter, such ought to be the spirit of rulers, even now. Their one single and supreme desire, in every action, should be the glory of Christ in the welfare and salvation of the souls He has redeemed with His blood. In the means they are to employ for this end, they will need, and are earnestly to implore, wisdom from above. They will enact righteous laws of social order, borrowing all their maxims from the word and the gospel of God. They are to execute those laws with faithfulness and diligence, remembering that the judgment is God's, and that all unrighteousness and respect of persons is an abomination before Him. They are to punish crimes against the life of man, because man is made in the image of God ; and crimes against property, because theft and robbery are condemned by the lips of the great Lawgiver. Blasphemy is to be repressed, and open idolatry frowned upon or forbidden, because they are a direct rebellion against the Almighty, and an insult to His holy name. To ascertain the will and the truth of God will be the first aim, and then to promote that truth, as the true and only source of solid peace, and of national safety and happiness. There will be a wise and tender forbearance to those in error, because God himself is rich in forbearing love. There will be zeal in the cause of truth and righteousness, for such zeal is also acceptable unto God. And especially, remembering that the full re-

demption is not come, there will be a watchful caution against the surrounding evils ; lest, on the one hand, the truth should be crushed and oppressed by a blind and perverse promotion of deadly error ; or, on the other, be cast aside and despised in the spirit of pride and open ungodliness. Moulded by such maxims, the happy state would be rising ever to a higher standard, and approach more and more nearly to the blessedness of those nations, who shall hereafter walk in the light that beams from the city of God.

IV. Finally, the visions which have now been explained exhibit to us THE UNSPEAKABLE GLORY OF THE WORLD TO COME. A few remarks on this boundless subject will be not unsuited as a close to the whole inquiry.

Two thousand four hundred years have now passed since the later of these visions was revealed to the prophet in his exile at Babylon. The angel summed the whole message in one short contrast. "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings that shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." Through long ages the former sentence has been fulfilled. Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, have prevailed in succession ; and the Little Horn, as here predicted, has practised and prospered in the latter half of these times of the Gentiles. But all this has only been a preparation for the fulfilment of the rest. The history of so many centuries is revealed by the Holy Spirit as only a brief and transitory introduction to the kingdom in which Christ and his people shall reign for ever.

And yet how vast is the scheme of providence, even in this part alone, which is only a magnificent porch to the temple of God ! What millions of immortal beings have appeared on the stage ! What wars, and triumphs, and victories, what changing scenes, what deep emotions, and what a ceaseless variety of stirring interests from age to age, make up this Divine introduc-

tion to the promised kingdom! Every form of art and science, of eloquence and genius, of military daring and heroism, and religious devotion, are united in the history of these four prophetic empires, which have only been preparing the way for the everlasting dominion of the Son of Man.

Now if the preparation merely be so vast and wonderful, how glorious must that kingdom be which it is designed to introduce! The mighty empires of the earth, with all their grandeur, are set aside as unworthy to be compared with the glory that shall follow. It seems as if God had permitted men to exhaust the resources of their pride and genius, to build up their most stately polities, and lavish all the treasures of natural wisdom in adorning these kingdoms of the world, that the superior glory of true holiness and righteousness might be displayed, with a brighter contrast, in the kingdom of heaven.

But this truth, however important, is not the whole of the lesson implied in the sacred vision. Amidst the moral contrast, there is still a perfect unity of design. The same God who will hereafter manifest His sovereignty in the kingdom of our Lord, even now is ruling in the kingdom of men. So that every event in the whole history of the four empires is a link in the one chain of His providence, and contributes, by a sure and mysterious process, to help on the glory that shall be revealed.

This truth is seen, most eminently, in the life of our blessed Lord himself. Midway almost in the course of these predicted empires, the Son of God was born for our salvation. The mystic stone was cut out without hands. It was a decree of the Roman emperor which fulfilled the prophecy of Messiah's birth-place. It was a Roman governor before whom He appeared at His trial; it was a Roman mode of punishment to which he was sentenced; and the very form and manner in which the world's redemption was wrought out was the result of their actual dominion over the land of Israel. Here we see, in a striking light, how

the political changes of the earth have been working out the counsels of God, and will be found to be linked for ever with all the highest and holiest mysteries of the world to come.

And as it was in the person of our Lord, so must it be also with the history of His people. During the course of these empires the saints of God are brought out from the darkness of sin, and prepared for their inheritance, who will reign hereafter in this kingdom of their Saviour. All the changes of providence are subservient to this great end. If empires rise and fall, if kingdoms emerge from obscurity, or sink in gradual decay, the work of grace is unceasing amid every change ; and each event will be found to have been fitting the servants of God, by mercies and trials, by peace or conflict, for their final inheritance. The same principle extends also to the whole course of national providence here on earth. The discovery of human corruption, the various forms of sin and evil, are preparing the way, by the gift of dear-bought experience, for a more hearty and living reception of the grace of Christ. The beautiful scenes of nature are all shadows of good things to come. The stars, in their courses, not only fight against the enemies of God, but prefigure the holy dignity of the children of the resurrection. (Judges v. 20. Dan. xii. 3.) The flowers of the field announce, with a silent prophecy, the brighter and more excellent clothing which God will there bestow on His people. (Matt. vi. 30.) The precious stones, sought out from the bowels of the earth, polished and set in the high priest's breast-plate, prefigure the servants of Christ, prepared and renewed by the Holy Spirit to shine as a royal diadem in the hand of God for ever. (Isaiah lxi. 2.) Not even the least event in these thousands of years, or through the whole extent of these mighty empires, but will be found to have borne its part in heightening the glory of the future kingdom when it shall appear. As the bones of Joseph were carefully preserved in Egypt, and carried through the wilderness for

forty years, till a place was found for them in the land of Canaan, where our Lord conversed afterwards with the woman of Samaria ; so will every trophy and memorial of death in past ages be treasured up in the memory of God's people ; till they shall hereafter, in the kingdom of Messiah, be seen issuing, each of them, in some nobler message of Divine grace and fuller triumph of redemption. Not greater is the contrast between the tombs of Egypt and the lifegiving promise of the Saviour on the well of Sychem, than between the history of the four empires read with a worldly eye, and the same history, treasured in the memory of the faithful, and hereafter revealed in the light of heaven as one continual preparation for the everlasting glory.

Here, then, is a field for the meditations of the Christian, wider than all which can occupy the thoughts, or employ the researches, of mere human learning. To read the past in the light of inspired prophecy, to trace in every event of time some link of God's eternal counsel, and thus to learn, in every part, the grace and compassion of that Lord, who once suffered for us on the cross, and now reigns in heaven, is the high calling of the Church at the present hour. Every day and year of continued forbearance and long-suffering is only to prepare for a fuller display of holiness and love, and to add fresh elements of delight and joy to that exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which now remains for the people of God.

Such are a few of the great lessons which are forced upon our minds by the survey of this wonderful scheme of Divine Providence, revealed, thousands of years ago, to the holy prophet amidst the splendour of Babylon. The walls of Babylon are now thrown down, her plains are a desolation ; a few scanty ruins alone survive from all her palaces. But the truth of the Lord, which is here revealed, endures without change. Its lessons apply to the Church at the present hour, even with a deeper interest than in former years. "For all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass ;

the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

And surely all these practical truths, drawn from the prophecy, converge and meet in one further lesson, which should be applied more directly to every conscience. It is the lesson taught in the words of another prophet, in the prospect of judgment—"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." It is repeated by the great Apostle, and addressed in a still more pointed form to every Christian. "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves." That kingdom which is here promised will not come without a solemn and eternal separation. Each part of God's word closes alike by fixing our attention on this certain truth. "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." "He that is unjust let him be unjust still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and behold I come quickly, to render to every man according as his work shall be." How little will it profit us to have our understandings enlarged by surveying the history of these empires, and our imagination awakened by the prospect here unfolded of Messiah's kingdom; and still to fall short of the promise through our own unbelief! How mournful and wretched would it be to hear the sentence pronounced against us, like the lord of Samaria, "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not eat thereof"—to be in sight of heaven's gate, and miss the entrance, to be not far from the kingdom of God, and then to sink into the outer darkness! The words of the vision, which describe to us the dissolution of the great image, should remind us of the sentence pronounced against the unbeliever. "The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

In the prospect, then, of this searching judgment, let us turn, with a simple and earnest faith, to the cross of Christ, as the only shelter that can avail. His gracious promise has been given, to assure our hearts, and banish our fears. "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no-wise cast out." Even in the hour of judgment, to them that look for him He will appear without sin to their salvation; and the prophecy be fulfilled in their blissful experience—"A man shall be an hiding-place from the storm, a covert from the tempest, as rivers of waters in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Amidst the songs of angels and the joy of the universe, He will then accomplish those glorious promises, rich with hope and with everlasting comfort; to plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.

APPENDIX.

I.

ON THE FOUR EMPIRES IN CONNEXION WITH SACRED CHRONOLOGYY.

In the present volume no attempt has been made to assign the precise date or continuance of the Little Horn, or to enter on the detail of those times which are announced in the prophecy. The reason of the omission may be soon explained. I have already, in the 'First Elements of Sacred Prophecy,' examined at length the objections urged against the year-day theory, and developed the firm and solid evidence on which it rests. It was needless, then, to traverse the ground afresh, and to enter into the proof once more in the present work. On the other hand, the question of the exact date of these times is naturally connected with all the other prophetic numbers, and can only be treated in a solid manner, by combining them all in one general survey, and taking the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks as their natural foundation. This was too large a subject to be introduced in passing, and in an elementary work. I have therefore reserved it for a distinct inquiry, for which considerable materials are collected already: but which, from its wide range, its difficulty and importance, and the various theories to be examined, it may require some time to mature. On the general question of the year-day interpretation, some valuable remarks will be found in Mr. Elliott's Commentary on the Apo-

calypse, just published, an important and seasonable gift to the Church of Christ.

While the present volume, however, was in the press, a work on Sacred Chronology has appeared, of much research and learning, the 'Ordo Sæculorum' by the Rev. H. Browne. Its direct object is to establish a system, based on the Hebrew numbers, and the larger reckoning of the period from the Exode to the Temple; and to rear on this basis a superstructure of curious and remarkable analogies. In the general preference for the Hebrew reckoning I fully agree with the author. His detection also of a remarkable error, which vitiates many of Mr. Greswell's reasonings, is complete and decisive, and anticipates some remarks I had designed to offer on the same subject; though perhaps the correction might have been made in a gentler tone, as the error is abstract rather than doctrinal, and the author himself is not immaculate in his own reasonings.

Had the work, however, been confined to its direct object, any notice of it here would be misplaced; and any judgment on the competing systems of Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Greswell, and the learned author, resting alike on supposed internal analogies, though in other points widely different, would be premature. But since the Introduction speaks of it as one merit of the system, that it 'helps to demolish' the year-day exposition, and in a distinct Appendix on the study of Prophecy, the common view of the Four Empires is cast aside; it is desirable to submit these parts to a brief analysis. Reasoning, weak in itself, will sometimes pass current and assume a fictitious importance, when it is coupled with strong assertions, and appears under the protecting shadow of some laborious and learned system.

There are two points which I purpose to examine in order—the reasons alleged for innovating in the application of the Four Empires, and the supposed demolition of the year-day interpretation.

I. The view of the author on the Four Empires forms a section of the last Appendix, (pp. 675—679) and some remarks to the same effect may be found in other pages. 'Christians,' it is said, 'ought sooner to have learned the true interpretation of the prophecy. We are beginning to learn it slowly and reluctantly.'

1. The hypothesis honoured with this preference is, in substance, that of Mr. Maitland, borrowed in part from Ben Ezra or Lacunza. The Four Empires are supposed to be Babylon and Persia, Greece, Rome, and one that is still future. Half, however, of the original theory is abandoned, for Mr. Browne admits that the same empires are intended in both the visions.

Thus, among the six recent authors who forsake the usual view, we have now five varieties of opinion. One supposes the fourth empire, the ten horns, and the little horn, all to have risen, and only the times to be literal and future. Two others hold the empire to be that of Rome, but the eleven horns to be still future. A fourth holds the empires in the image to be perhaps as above, or perhaps Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece ; but the four beasts all certainly future. A fifth makes Babylon, Greece, and Rome, as before the three first of the image, but the four beasts *probably* still to arise. Finally, Mr. Browne completes the cycle of varieties ; for he adopts one-half of the last hypothesis, and rejects the other, with equal confidence and decision. No wonder that the chariot of the new system moves slowly and reluctantly along, when every one of the steeds is pulling it in a different direction.

2. Let us however grasp, if possible, this Proteus theory under its latest form. The three empires, in each vision alike, are to be Babylon with Persia, Greece, and Rome. The reasons offered by previous writers for this view have been refuted aleady. No two of the four empires, I have shewn, are so strongly distinguished in Scripture as these which the new hypothesis would blend into one. What fresh arguments are alleged by our present author for their union !

(1.) First, 'it is strange that interpreters should ever have dreamt of applying this symbol (the bear) to the Persian empire. When did that power ever show itself as a ravening bear, devouring the pleasant land, the Lord's inheritance ? Nothing but "the exigency of system" which required, that the fourth empire should be that of Rome, could have rendered the interpretation tolerable for a moment. Certainly the attempts of the commentators are exceedingly helpless and awkward.'

Now, by the author's own exposition, the Persian empire is included in the symbol of the lion. A very acute

zoological discrimination must therefore be required in such an objection as this. The lion, a constant emblem in Scripture for ravening cruelty, may fitly symbolize the Persian kingdom ; but that it should be represented by a *bear* is quite absurd, and not to be tolerated for a moment ; only the exigencies of a system can explain it. Yet naturalists will tell us, with one consent, that of the two animals the lion is the more purely and thoroughly carnivorous. The objection, then, is altogether futile, so far as it refers to the nature of the emblems.

But again, the Persian kingdom " never showed itself as a ravening bear, devouring the Lord's inheritance." Yet, in simple fact, this very empire is the only one on record which ever passed a decree for the utter extinction of the whole race of Israel. Even at the present day a standing festival of the Jewish synagogue commemorates this great deliverance, as parallel to the redemption from Egypt. And if we turn to more general history, we find that this empire was proverbial among heathen authors for cruelty and oppression. The history of Cambyses, in Herodotus, is one striking instance. Never surely had an objection less warrant in point of fact ; and never was one more self-destructive.

(2.) The next difficulty has been refuted already. ' The third kingdom of brass bears rule over all the earth, which Alexander did not, and Rome did.' Now, in fact, the empire of Alexander was much wider than that of Nebuchadnezzar himself, which the prophet styles universal. Such objections are astonishing from their evident rashness. One verse is expounded so as to contradict flatly the verse immediately before it.

(3.) ' Commentators, following each other implicitly, speak of the quadripartite division of Alexander's empire. The quadripartite division is a fancy, which let those prove from history who can.' I have proved it already, and that from the very evidence adduced in order to set it aside. It has also been unfolded long before by Sir Isaac Newton, whose claims to be esteemed an exact and careful reasoner are at least not inferior to those of our author.

(4.) ' It is plain to common sense that the four heads of the leopard, looking east, west, north, and south, denote universality of dominion, and the four wings, in like manner, universality of conquest.'

To appeal to common sense on behalf of a mushroom theory twenty years old, against the consenting judgment of the Church, or at least of its ablest divines for seventeen centuries, is itself a paradox of no ordinary dimensions. But next, the prophecy says nothing whatever of the heads being towards the north, south, east, and west. It is a pure imagination of the author. The four horns of the he-goat, however, *are* said to be toward the four winds of heaven ; but these the author himself explains as divisions of Alexander's empire ; and that empire, he asserts, was *not* universal. Again, he makes them to be four divisions of that empire, and yet he has just declared that such a division never occurred. Only the contradiction is smoothed down by supposing that 'it is not a simple prediction but complex,' and refers to two later crises also, and 'had only a partial *adumbrated* fulfilment,' in the time of Epiphanes. That fulfilment must be shadowy indeed, which, in the view of its own advocate, rests on a mere fancy, and involves a contradiction of common sense.

Let us now sum up the reasoning of this objection. First it is plain to common sense, that the view of nearly all readers and writers for seventeen centuries is absurd, and that the true exposition rests with three living authors, who all disagree with each other. Next, the four heads are towards the four winds, of which the prophecy says nothing. Thirdly, this fourfold direction of the heads, which is *not* asserted, proves them to denote universal dominion ; but the fourfold direction of the goat, which *is* asserted, does *not* prove them to denote universal dominion. Fourthly, it is plain to common sense that the wings of a fowl denote universal conquest, not rapid motion ; as if it were self-evident that birds use their wings, not to assist their speed, but to devour their prey.

But, besides these paralogisms, other difficulties remain. If the four heads must denote universal dominion, how is it that the first and fourth empires, which are both declared to be universal, have one head only ? Again, if four denote universal dominion, the seven in the Apocalyse should denote a rule wider than universal. The lives of the three first beasts are prolonged after their dominion is taken away. Therefore, on this hypothesis, the leopard will have an universal rule after its

dominion has ceased entirely. Further, if the four heads denote, not individuals, but universality of dominion, how is it that the seven heads in Revelation denote 'Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero,—Galba, Otho, and Vitellius in one—and Vespasian the destroyer;' which, the author affirms, scarcely admits of a doubt? How is it that the third empire is that of Rome, yet its heads do not denote Roman emperors; and the fourth beast is not that of Rome, while its heads are seven Roman emperors, who have been dead nearly two thousand years before its own rise? Such fulfilments of prophecy are shadowy indeed, and, in fact, a mere darkening of counsel by words without knowledge.

3. 'The nature of the third beast aptly symbolizes the Roman empire. It is a leopard or panther, not fierce as a lion or a bear, but seeming mild, insinuating, and flexible in its policy, yet ready at the last for the deadly spring. By dint of long habit, certainly not by reading history with open eyes, interpreters have come to persuade themselves that the Roman empire, and particularly in the east, (for with that the prophecy is concerned), answers to the description of the fourth beast. This was not the way Rome dealt with conquered nations; though when through the infatuation of the Jews things came to extremities, the third beast did for them put on the character of the fourth. And I admit that the closing scene of the third empire, which in the eye of prophecy coincides with the last day of Jerusalem, is blended with the opening scenes of the last or fourth empire. No prophecy clearly discriminates between the third crisis and the fourth.'

Here is an ample variety of novelties and paradoxes strung close together. Let us examine them one by one.

(1.) First, we have a question of natural history. 'The leopard is mild and insinuating,' and therefore a fit emblem of the Romans. Now in the first books of natural history that I open, I find that the leopard belongs to the family, sub-family, and genus *Felis*. The family 'constitute the most formidable race of animals on the earth, the most blood-thirsty in their habits, and the most dreaded by mankind. An insatiable love for blood is one of their prominent characteristics.' The leopard belongs to the *typical* sub-family, in which these characters are most developed. It belongs to the

typical genus in that sub-family, which 'has the detestable pre-eminence of being the most ruthless and sanguinary.' 'The whole race may be said to delight in butchery, since they will destroy from the mere love of destruction, after their natural appetite has been sated.' 'The animal, whose thirst for human blood exceeds that of all others, is the Asiatic tiger, the scourge of Asia.' And next follows 'another animal of the same genus, but equally formidable—a LEOPARD, most beautifully spotted, whose strength and ferocity equal his size, and render him a terror to the villages near his haunts.' This will dispose of the objection on the score of zoology, and the mild and insinuating character of the leopard. It would be more reasonable to invert the argument; for it might have some show of reason to allege that the blood-thirsty leopard could not denote the refined Greeks, but must rather refer to the people who boasted in Mars as their patron.

(2.) But the emblem suits the Romans, from their 'flexible policy.' Let us hear the best historians.

'The Romans made their greatest advances to empire, without departing from the policy by which they were preserved in the infancy of their power. They did not submit to any enemy, in consequence of any event or under the pressure of any calamity whatever. . . . The Romans alone spurned the advances of victorious enemies, were not to be moved by sufferings, and did not let it be supposed that they were governed by fear in any case whatever. By their famous maxim in war, that the submissive were to be spared and the proud to be humbled, it became necessary for them in every quarrel, to conquer or to perish.' (Ferg. Book ii. c. 2.)

'Rome lay bleeding at every pore. But her spirit was invincible. Peace was not thought of for one moment, nor was it proposed to withdraw a single soldier from Spain, or Sicily, or Sardinia.' 'If panic for one moment unnerved *the iron courage* of the Roman aristocracy, on the next their inborn spirit revived: and their *resolute will*, striving beyond its present power, created, as is the law of our nature, the power it required. . . . . The principal object of our interest, is the one *rock*, now islanded by the waters, and on which they dash furiously on every side, as though they must needs sweep it away. But, *the rock stands unshaken*:

the waters become feebler ; the flood shrinks ; the *rock* rises higher and higher, and the danger is passed away.' (Arn. Rome ii. pp. 115, 146.) Enough, then, of the 'flexible policy' of the Romans, unless all historians, as well as all commentators, are to be set aside.

(3.) A third curious result follows the new interpretation. The poet tells us that

> Græcia capta feros victores cepit, et artes
> Intulit agresti Latio.

Therefore the *bear*, the most clumsy, rough, and unshapely animal, even to a proverb, must prefigure the refined and elegant Greeks, whose name is equally a proverb for taste and refinement ; while the rude, fierce, and rustic Romans, must be represented by the elegant, beautiful, and graceful leopard.

(4.) Again, Persia, it is said, cannot be denoted by the bear, because, though often cruel to others, it has never wasted or ravaged the Lord's inheritance. The Romans, on the contrary, cannot be the cruel fourth beast ; because though they ravaged Judea, as it is allowed, up to the letter of the description, they are supposed not to have wasted others equally. Thus premises, diametrically opposite to each other, are used in these two cases to justify the novel theory.

(5.) 'The closing scene of the third empire in the eye of prophecy coincides with the last day of Jerusalem.' In other words, prophecy exhibits the Roman empire as closing, at the very moment when it was in the height of its power. It leaves that part of history a total blank which is most vital to the church of God. It passes by the main part of Gentile history in a professed account of the Gentile empires. It presents the fall of Rome as the event next before the millennial glory ; and yet views the closing scene of Roman power as having come eighteen centuries before, when all the world was at the feet of the imperial city, and its power had reached the very summit of greatness. Surely if it were designed to turn prophecy into a laughing-stock for infidels, no more effectual step could be taken, than is done, in simplicity of heart, by the propounders of such theories as these.

(6.) 'No prophecy clearly discriminates between the third crisis and the fourth,'—that is, between the prophetic close of the Roman empire, and the prophetic

close of the author's supposed fourth and future empire. And no wonder, since the two are really, and by the consent of all prophecy, and all ages of the church, one and the same. But then how rash it must be to forsake the constant judgment of the church from the beginning, in order to adopt a view for which no prophecy, it is here owned, affords any clear warrant.

The third crisis may, however, be explained as referring to the Fall of Jerusalem, apart from the author's own view, that this was the close of the third empire. Even as thus explained, the assertion is quite untrue. The eleventh of Daniel, the twenty-first of St. Luke, the prophecies of St. Paul, and the whole of the Apocalypse, discriminate the two events widely from each other. So also do the closing chapters of Zechariah.

Thus the objection contradicts both natural science, and Roman history, is neutralized by the author's own concessions, and involves a groundless paradox in almost every sentence.

In fact, when the plain, clear marks which history yields of the succession of empires are cast aside, the whole becomes a heap of confusion, a mere plaything for a wanton fancy. There is no accounting for diversity of taste in points of zoological resemblance, when it can be imagined that the bear is too cruel for a power that is denoted by the lion, but that it is an exact description of the refined and elegant Greeks ; while the leopard, from its mildness and flexibility, will exactly pourtray the mild and flexible spirit of the Romans. But the succession of empires is a clear and simple fact, open to every reader who will not shut his eyes against the plainest evidence. And this once established, those who search with due judgment and caution will find the peculiar and marked propriety of the emblems, as they are usually applied. Many things are surprising in these objections ; but the most surprising is the quiet confidence reposed in arguments, where *both* premises are demonstrably untrue.

Other paradoxes follow, not less startling. The ten horns, though still future, are 'adumbrated' in ten successive emperors, from Julius to Vespasian. The uprooting of three before the *eleventh* is 'shadowed' by three of these emperors being displaced by the *tenth*. The four heads on the Roman beast denote the abstract idea

of universal dominion. The seven heads on some future *unrisen* empire, denote, in an adumbration—nine Roman emperors, from Augustus to Vespasian. The ten *contemporary* horns, in the same future empire, are adumbrated by ten *successive* emperors, the reckoning being now from Julius instead of Augustus. Whether the ten horns in Revelation be the same as the seven heads, with the addition of Julius Cæsar to the number, is not distinctly explained. Very slow and reluctant, it may be safely affirmed, will be the adoption of these adumbratory expositions. The whole is indeed a phantasmagoria of shadows, where nothing is clear, nothing definite, a floating sea of loose fancies which bid defiance to all the laws of evidence. It is astonishing that an author who displays so much learning and research, and in some cases, accuracy, could dream of overthrowing, by such expositions, the deliberate conviction of nineteen-twentieths of the church from the time of Justin to the present day.

II. A second point has now to be briefly examined, the threatened demolition of the year-day theory. And here a few short remarks will be sufficient.

1. First, the direct evidence is left quite untouched. Not a syllable, I believe, is advanced to disturb any of the arguments which have been alleged by the advocates of the year-day, and which have been collected and enlarged in the 'Elements of Sacred Prophecy.' If the theory is demolished, it is not by a battering ram, but by a secret mine.

2. The number in Dan. viii., and so also the others in chapter xii., are applied to Antiochus, a view abandoned even by the Futurists, and rejected by them as indefensible. It is needless to examine the details of the hypothesis: it will be enough to state the premises on which it rests. First, that the four heads of the leopard denote the universal rule of the Romans, because they are towards the north, south, east, and west, which the prophecy nowhere affirms; but the four horns of the goat, which *are* declared to be towards the four winds, denote four parts of Alexander's kingdom, of which nevertheless, the quadripartite division is 'a mere fancy,' and which 'did not bear rule over all the earth.' Next, that though the empire of Alexander never suffered a fourfold

division, the four horns are four kingdoms of that very empire, out of one of which Antiochus, the little horn, arose.

The actual exposition of the times is as follows. The 2300 days, reckoned backward, not from the Dedication or Maccabean cleansing of the sanctuary, but from the victory over Nicanor, three years after the sanctuary had been cleansed and the sacrifices restored, will lead us to a date eight days before the profanation as distinctly recorded in Maccabees; which earlier date, we are *therefore* to suppose, was that of the profanation itself. Again, the 1290 days 'seem to end at some critical event after the dedication.' What may be the nature of this event, the history does not inform us. The author merely conjectures that it was 'some signal victory of the Maccabees'—its place, its occasion, and its character or consequences, all equally unknown. Really it would be as reasonable to think of battering down Gibraltar with nut-shells, as to dream of demolishing the year-day theory by such intepretations as these.

3. Let us now proceed a step further, and we shall find that the learned author's hypotheses, supposing them true, would actually yield a strong presumption in favour of the theory which they are alleged to overthrow.

And first, in general, their main feature is a connected system of prophetic times, commencing with the creation, and proceeding in such parallels as these:—1656 years from the creation to the Deluge, and from the Exodus to the fall of Jerusalem; 430 from the flood to Abraham, from Abraham to the Exodus; 490 from the Exodus to Samuel, under the law; from David to the Fall of the Temple, under the prophets—from Ezra to the crucifixion. Other correspondencies of 437½ years from Malachi to the Crucifixion, and 437½ days from our Lord's baptism to the same event, with many more of a similar kind.

Now supposing all these to be true, or at least the principle on which they depend, who of sound mind can believe that the fall of Jerusalem, or that of Barchochebas, has put an end to all this Divine economy of times—that 1800 years before Christ are rich, in every part, with these connected relations of chronology, and that not one exists in the eighteen centuries that follow? Such a notion has a mark of inconsistency, and almost of absur-

dity, on its face. The natural conclusion from the main principle would be, that a similar economy of prophetic times reaches down to the present day, and would thus establish either the year-day, or some equivalent theory.

The same remark applies still more powerfully to the interpretation of the Seventy Weeks. Those who are familiar with the subject know that the most direct argument for the year-day is commonly drawn from this vision. The reasoning is of this kind. One main period, that of the seventy weeks, is revealed between Daniel and the First Advent. One main period of the same kind is revealed between the time of St. John and the Second Advent, the time, times and a half, or 1260 days. The Seventy Weeks, in the most usual sense of the words, would denote 490 days; but they actually denote 490 years. And hence, by the plainest analogy, the 1260 days, or time, times, and a half, will also denote 1260 years.

Two opposite replies have been made to this argument. Some deny the fact, and maintain, that the seventy weeks denote weeks of *days*, and are still future. Others deny the criticism; and, while they allow that the prophecy is fulfilled in years, they assert that its grammatical sense is merely seventy *sevens*, that is, of years, and that it contains no reference to days whatever. The two concessions, separately taken, are consistent with a rejection of the year-day system; when combined together, they would concede the whole argument.

Now, in the 'Ordo Sæculorum,' *both these principles are conceded together*. The terms, grammatically, have a reference to days, and a sort of literal fulfilment, but they are fulfilled in years also. The following extracts seem to be decisive of the author's view.

'From this term (Sept. B.C. 459) we are to reckon $7 + 62 + \frac{1}{2}$ periods of seven years each. The first of these will terminate at B.C. 410, the second at B.C. 25, the third at the Crucifixion, March A.D. 29.'

'In the Chronography of our Lord's life, no date is more unanimously expressed by ancient authorities than Jan. 6 for His baptism. Now, from this day to the Crucifixion are 437 days, and to the hour of the Passover $437\frac{1}{2} = 434 + 3\frac{1}{2}$, or sixty-two weeks and a half week, at the end of which half week Messiah is cut off.'

'I cannot but therefore think, that here we have a

fulfilment of this memorable prophecy.' And again, 'It may be that from the day and hour of Zachariah's vision to the instant of the Circumcision, that great type of the cutting off of Messiah, is just the period of 62 weeks and a half week.'

It is not my purpose here to offer any opinion at length on the truth or solidity of these conclusions. One thing, however, is clear. If true, instead of demolishing the year-day theory, they would tend to confirm one main basis on which it rests. The analogy they would establish in its favour would be one of the strongest it is possible to conceive. The two contrasted lines of defence taken by its opponents are both swept away. The vision thus includes days in its proper meaning, so as to be twice fulfilled in them; and yet its main fulfilment is in years. Those who hold the year-day view of the times, and yet look for a short triumph of infidelity at the last, could not frame an analogy more decisive in their favour than has been volunteered by our author; and this too in the very system which was 'to have for one, and not the least important use, that it would help to demolish that vicious interpretation.'

The new scheme of chronology, then, in its real bearing on prophecy, illustrates once more the words of Thamus to Hermes in the allegory of Plato. 'O most ingenious Thoth, it is the part of one man to bring forth the inventions of art, and of another to judge what effect they will produce. And you now, being parent of this invention, through parental prejudice have ascribed it a power the exact opposite of the truth.'

But while nothing can well be feebler or more inconclusive than the reasonings here advanced for these prophetical innovations, I would acknowledge freely the research and learning evinced by the author in the chronological inquiry. Still, even here, I conceive, a more strict and cautious induction is needful, not only before infidels can be convinced, as the writer seems to hope, but before Christians themselves can yield to the evidence, either of this or of any similar theory. The ways of God are in the deep waters. All things indeed are ordered in His counsel, in fixed times and seasons: and we may be sure that all His appointments are infinitely wise. But when we trace this counsel in the relation of those times and seasons either to the pro-

perties of numbers or to the heavenly motions, we may soon get beyond our depth, and confound the illusions of our own fancy, or even direct mistakes and false reasonings, with the marks of omniscient wisdom. So far as we follow the express teaching of scripture, we are safe. A little way we may perhaps venture, by analogy to those truths which are more clearly revealed. But the landmarks are soon lost, when we enter on the tempting field of numerical speculation. Nowhere is the strictness of the Baconian philosophy, and the practical caution of Newton, more eminently needed. When we have been able to assign an abstract reason why the year should be of the particular length 365,2422414 solar days, we may begin to venture, without presumption, to form or to fortify a system of chronology on abstract grounds. But if even this first step very far transcends our abilities, we do well to pause, before we dream of converting infidels, or think of magnifying God's omniscient wisdom, by such a course and order of investigation.

It may be safely affirmed that, hitherto at least, to attain certainty on the mere historic outlines of chronology has been the utmost extent of real progress, and it may well be doubted whether any have attained even thus far. Let us take, for instance, that part of sacred chronology which lies nearest ourselves, and where, if anywhere, we might expect sure grounds of conviction. Three authors have, quite of late, bestowed much pains on this subject, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Greswell, and the writer of the work here noticed. Three different years are assigned by them to the nativity, two to the baptism of John, three to our Lord's first passover, and three to the crucifixion. Besides these diversities, each is exposed to at least one palpable objection, when viewed as a complete system. The first is based on a complete rejection, on very slender and insufficient grounds, of the main contemporary witness, Josephus, as wilfully dishonest and corrupt. The second involves a hypothesis, demonstrably untrue, of an error in the week-day reckoning, in connexion with the solar and lunar tables. The last involves the entire rejection, against the judgment of all impartial critics, of two main notes of time in the gospel history, and the virtual contradiction of a third, besides other difficulties on which it is needless to dwell. While such is the pre-

sent state of the sacred chronology in its most recent period, caution and reverence are eminently needed in those who address themselves to such inquiries. For assuredly the words of St. Paul apply with peculiar force to this vast and mysterious subject, the Divine ordination of times and seasons throughout all ages. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then, face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as we are known."

II.

ON THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

THE time of the Second Advent, as unfolded in Chap. XVII. of the present work, involves naturally the doctrine of the First Resurrection. I have avoided, however, the direct introduction of this topic, partly from the abundant variety of other evidence; and partly, as having treated of it elsewhere, in one of the recent 'Lectures on the Advent.' Since then, a pamphlet has appeared, by the Rev. E. Garrard Marsh, expressly designed to refute the arguments of that discourse. It seems due to the character and courtesy of the author to notice his observations, and no occasion is likely to offer itself more suitable than the present. I will therefore, in a few pages, explain and confirm the disputed parts of the former argument.

Six reasons were advanced in the discourse to prove the literal nature of the first resurrection—the previous events, the subjects of the resurrection itself, the office assigned to them, the mention of the souls of the martyrs, the promise to the confessors, and the resurrection of the rest of the dead. Four of these, including some of the strongest and plainest, are left untouched by Mr. Marsh in his reply. He examines two only, the fourth and the sixth, and parts the former of these into several fragments. His observations on these shall now be carefully examined.

I. THE MENTION OF THE SOULS OF THE MARTYRS was alleged in the discourse as one proof of the literal sense. This, I was aware, might at first seem a paradox, since the words have been commonly reckoned the chief pillar of the figurative interpretation. The usual reasoning is of this kind. The spirits of the martyrs, and not their bodies, are here said to rise again. And therefore the prophecy relates, not to a bodily, but a spiritual resurrection, on which the *spirits*, or principles of the martyrs, are animated with new life in the person of their holy successors.

The reasoning opposed to this in the Lecture is the following. The *souls*, and not the *spirits* of the martyrs, are here mentioned. But the word *soul* is constantly used in connection with whatever is most strictly *personal;* while the word *spirit* is commonly employed where there is a *federal*, or *vicarious* meaning. Thus John came in the spirit of Elias; but it would do violence to every rule of scripture language, to say that he came with or in the *soul* of Elias. The latter word occurs in the New Testament more than a hundred times, and, with two exceptions at the most, always denotes what is exclusively and strictly personal.

Again, the prophecy does not affirm a *resurrection*, but a *life* of the souls, or of the martyrs to whom they belong. Now by the life of the soul is meant, in the general usage of scripture, its natural life, or union with the body. Hence the life of the souls here mentioned must imply a bodily resurrection.

The first part of this argument Mr. Marsh concedes, and rather strangely affirms that no one, in his knowledge, has denied it. Yet the figurative exposition, in its most usual form, has rested mainly on assuming the opposite, that the text does not relate personally to the martyrs themselves. Nay, Mr. Marsh himself, after modifying the hypothesis so as to avoid the difficulty, relapses in another page into this very interpretation. 'By the martyrs living again, is meant, I contend, the revival of the *spirit* they exhibited when on earth.' Yet this is precisely the view which is refuted by the strictly personal meaning of the word, *soul;* and which the respected author seems there to affirm no one has ever maintained.

Mr. Marsh himself, however, escapes the argument in

another way. He interprets the passage thus, that the souls of the martyrs in paradise, by sympathy, rejoice in the triumph of holiness on earth, and thus may be said both to live and reign (p. 21.) Thus the metaphor, driven from its usual strong-hold in the word, *souls*, concentrates itself in the rest of the phrase, as a more tenable position.

To this new form of the hypothesis there are two or three decisive objections. First, since the passage is owned to describe some change that personally affects the martyrs, and they have beyond doubt, at some time or other, personally to live again by the reunion of soul and body, why not leave the term its natural meaning? Why have recourse to such a far-fetched interpretation, They lived again; that is, by sympathy, their joy in Paradise was increased; and they reigned, that is, their disembodied spirits in Paradise rejoiced that truth was reigning on earth? Surely it must be hard for a simple mind to acquiesce in such a strained and violent construction, when the personal living again of the martyrs at some time or other, is a fact of Divine revelation; and the only hindrance is, that to place it here does not suit our pre-conceived notions.

Again, on this view the prophecy tells us nothing of what occurs on earth, but only an occurrence in Paradise. How can this be possible, if we look for one moment at the context of the passage?

Thirdly, the martyrs' reign is clearly connected with the thrones in the vision. Hence if their living and reigning refers to an event in Paradise, the thrones must be in Paradise also. But the vision plainly teaches a different lesson, and implies that the thrones are on the earth. The personal meaning, therefore, of the word *soul*, conceded by our author, yields an argument fatal to the metaphorical construction, either under the old or the new form.

The life of the soul, I had further stated, consists in its union with the body, as the life of the spirit in its union with God. Hence the living again of the martyrs' souls must imply their bodily resurrection. Two texts are here quoted in reply. First, our Lord's address to the apostles. (Matt. x. 28.) But this is not applicable, for a plain reason. The question at issue is whether, in the scriptures, when souls are said to live, it has reference

to natural and personal, or else to a federal or spiritual life. But here the death of the soul which our Lord speaks of is equally distinct from both, and is the second death.

Next, the words of Luke xx. are alleged for the same purpose—"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." But these seem clearly to prove the exact reverse. For our Lord's express object there, is to prove the resurrection of the body; and his reasoning thus compels us to refer the words to the natural life of the patriarchs in the day of their resurrection. If death, in them, were not hereafter to be swallowed up in victory, the living God would never have called himself by their name. It is true that some learned writers have referred the passage to the separate state: but only by doing violence to the evidence of the whole context, which expressly relates to the resurrection.

On the other hand, out of a hundred passages in the New Testament where the word *soul* (ψυχη) occurs, there are forty in which the idea of natural life is so prominent, that the word is used in preference by our translators. When the apostles were ready to call for the fire from heaven, the answer is, "the Son of man is come, not to destroy men's *souls*, but to save them." Souls are described as hazarded, Acts xv. 26, as laid down, John xiii. 37; xv. 13, and as cut off, Acts iii. 23, in reference to natural life only. And so in this very prophecy, the martyrs "loved not their souls even unto death." The same phraseology is still more usual and conspicuous in the Old Testament, where more, I believe, than a hundred passages of this kind occur. The last verse of St. James is perhaps the only distinct example of an opposite usage.

The phrase, therefore, employed in this passage, disproves rather than warrants a figurative interpretation. Critical exactness forbids us to apply the promise made to the souls of the martyrs, except personally, to the martyrs themselves. And the life ascribed to them, unless we renounce the general usage of scripture, must be the natural life, which consists in the reunion of soul and body.

II. The other argument which the author endeavours to meet is drawn from the resurrection of the rest of

the dead. That resurrection is literal, and hence the first resurrection must be literal also.

Mr. Marsh, on the other hand, maintains that the event really designed by the resurrection of the rest of the dead, is the last apostasy. The reasons which, on the very face of the text, disprove this violent gloss, have been stated in the discourse. But the author advances one or two remarks in its support, which deserve a short examination.

1. First, he remarks that we read here of a first resurrection and a second death; but not of a first death or a second resurrection. And he assigns this reason, 'because the two words are then used in their proper and natural acceptation, whereas in other instances an epithet is attached to them, to show that they are used figuratively, and in a way of accommodation.'

This explanation has at least the merit of ingenuity. We should usually infer that when an event is called 'the first,' it is to distinguish it from a second, or perhaps several events of the same kind; or when it is termed 'the second,' that it is because a first of the same kind has gone before. But our author discovers a further and almost opposite reason. It is called 'the first' resurrection, he thinks, to shew that it is not properly a resurrection at all, and the second death, for the same purpose. Surely this is not more reasonable or probable than to maintain that the first Punic war is so called, to imply that it is not properly, but only in figure, a war with Carthage; and the second Crusade for a similar reason.

Two things are alleged to justify this strange construction. One is the existence of a similar mode of speaking on other occasions. 'A warm season in the early part of the year is sometimes called a first summer. But when the proper season comes round, we do not describe it as a second summer, because it is summer properly so called. Our blessed Lord is called the last Adam. But it would not therefore be correct to call our progenitor the first Adam, because he is Adam, properly so called; and accordingly St. Paul varies his language, when he names him, and calls him, the first man, Adam.' The phrase 'altera moenia Trojæ,' is referred to as a further illustration.

This is doubtless very ingenious, but will be found,

on a close examination, to be ingenious only. The first instance tells against the author. To make his solution applicable, the phrase must have been *a* first resurrection. Thus we may sometimes perhaps describe an early spring as *a* first summer ; but who would dream of saying 'it is the first summer' with any such meaning ? The words would at once suggest two successive years, with the true and proper summer that belongs to each. Now in Rev. xx. 7. the article not only occurs, but occurs redoubled. The illustration, therefore, does not confirm, but refute, the proposed solution.

The other example is scarcely more pertinent. The apostle speaks there of 'the first man, Adam ;' and then, because he could not style our Lord 'the last man,' he varies the phrase, and calls him simply 'the last Adam.' If the word Adam, were here strictly a proper name, no parallel could hold from it the text in Revelation. But if it denotes a federal head of mankind, the phrase 'the last Adam,' is just as strict and appropriate, as the term 'the second man' in the following verse. The word *man* appears there in a modified sense, but is modified equally in both clauses ; and the terms, *first man*, and *second man* differ only, like the two resurrections, by the contrast in order of time.

But it seems needless to dwell on a point so clear. It is enough to inquire, whether the second miracle of our Lord (John iv. 54), the second Psalm (Acts iii. 33), the second benefit of the Corinthians (2 Cor. i. 15), the second veil of the temple (Heb. ix.) and the second Epistle of St. Peter, are to be counted an unreal miracle, a figurative psalm, an imaginary benefit, a metaphorical veil, and a fictitious and allegorical epistle ; because in no one of these examples the word *first* appears in the whole context. So again, to confine ourselves to this very book, the first love of the Ephesians, and the first voice of the angel (iv. 1.), will, by this process of alchymy, be transmuted into figures and metaphors ; because no second love, or second voice of the angel is named as such in the prophecy.

The only excuse for this violent strain upon the text, is that the first death and the second resurrection are not named by those titles in the vision. But there is a clear and simple reason for this in each case, without any recourse to these critical transmutations. The

first death had been in constant exhibition ever since the Fall, and not merely within the time of the vision. The destruction (chap. xix.) is only one specimen of its fulfilment, and its nature had been revealed by a thousand precedents. But the second death, though long predicted in its essential character as the final punishment of the wicked, is actually fulfilled only at the last day, and by the event described in the vision. Hence it is natural that our attention should be called to it by a solemn note of warning—'this is that final punishment and separation from God's presence, foretold through so many ages.' The first death was nothing strange or unusual; it has occurred twice in this same prophecy. The second death occurs once for all; it is irrevocable and final.

The resurrection, again, is often revealed in Scripture as the time of the great account. But the distinctness, in order and time, of the resurrection of the just, was more sparingly revealed. Yet it is a share in such a resurrection which alone is a real and unspeakable privilege. And hence, when it occurs, there is naturally an emphatic stamp, to remind us of its prerogative—'this is the resurrection, even the first one' (ἡ ἀναστάσις ἡ πρώτη) not only the first in order of time, but also that which pre-eminently deserves the name.

The mention of the first resurrection, again, infallibly suggests a second of the same kind. But this is not to life, but only to damnation. It is therefore the same, in fact, with the second death. The Holy Spirit, on this account, prefers to describe it by that term which is the more vividly expressive of its main spiritual character. That the event (xx. 12—15) is the predicted resurrection of the rest of the dead, or the second resurrection, is plain on the face of the whole passage to any simple reader. And hence there was no just source of ambiguity, but a deep moral lesson, in describing it rather by that solemn term, the second death.

Since, however, the strange gloss which turns the apostasy of Gog and Magog into the second resurrection has still some earnest defenders, let us test it a little more closely. On this view there are two symbolical resurrections in this vision; the first, of the souls of the martyrs, or the principles of righteousness; the second, of the rest of the dead, or the principles of open ungod-

liness. I will now briefly shew the many fatal objections which condemn this notion as utterly untenable and baseless.

1. First, on this view the real resurrection will be passed over in total silence. For in the closing part of the chapter the resurrection is not named; it is only implied by the plain contrast and correspondence between the second death and the first resurrection. On the present hypothesis this relation is destroyed, and the implication perishes also. So that, on this view, the vision will reveal nothing but a judgment of the dead as dead, or of disembodied spirits.

2. Next, this abuse of symbols makes a prediction of a real resurrection impossible. For the rising of all the dead, in two divisions, is thus made to denote merely two revivals of religion and of ungodliness. Hence no terms will be left by which a real resurrection can possibly be predicted.

3. Thirdly, before these two symbolical resurrections neither party will have symbolically arisen. In other words, there must then be no signal spread either of religion or ungodliness. Yet a signal confederacy of ungodliness is the last previous event which the vision describes. This alone should be enough to convict the interpretation of inconsistency and falsehood.

4. Fourthly, we are guilty hereby of a double violence on the words. Where the text does *not* express the resurrection at all (verses 12—15), it is taken for granted. While it *is* stated and expressed with a double emphasis, '*the* resurrection, *the* first one,' its reality is entirely denied. Surely this is to put in and leave out at the licence of a private will.

5. Fifthly, the two symbolical resurrections, by the hypothesis, are similar in kind, and occur in the same vision. And yet the description of them has not one point in common. For, in the last apostasy, no mention of the apostates as the dead occurs. No thrones are assigned them, no judgment is given to them. Instead of being described as raised, they are, on the contrary, said to be slain and devoured by fire. Every feature and phrase is one of contrast and not of resemblance. And hence we may reason thus. If the reign of the martyrs and the last apostasy are the two events contrasted, since the latter is a simple narrative, and not

symbolical, then the former also is a simple narrative, and implies a true and personal reign.

6. Sixthly, the contrast in verse 5 is rendered totally unmeaning. "But the rest of the dead lived not again," &c. For translate the symbols into plain language, and what will be their force? There was a signal revival of holiness in the earth; but a signal revival of ungodliness did not take place till the thousand years were finished. How strained and unnatural is this! The words in the text imply a natural tendency in our minds to look for the two resurrections at the same time; and correct this expectation. 'A firstfruits were raised; but the rest were not raised then, nor till after a thousand years.' But who could ever fancy that the most signal triumph of ungodliness would concur in time with the most signal triumph of holiness?

7. The symbol, again, in this second figurative resurrection, is quite unnatural. Let us grant that the rising of the martyrs and eminent Christians might denote the revival of true religion. The rest of the dead will then be all the dead of all ages, holy or unholy, except these eminent Christians. Thus, the rising of a company mingled of good and evil will denote a triumph of unmingled wickedness. The resurrection of the vast majority of mankind in all ages, will be the symbol for the growth of wickedness in the sinners of one generation. Can anything be more harsh and unnatural than such imagery used for such a purpose?

8. The first clause of verse 6 loses nearly all force or meaning on this view. It must then apply either to the martyrs themselves, or to the millennial Christians. If to the martyrs, it will be equivalent to this. 'Blessed and holy is he who is used symbolically, by his resurrection in vision, to describe this great revival of true religion.' If to the millennial Christians, we have to sacrifice the truth of every clause. For these are not raised either properly or symbolically; they have no peculiar exemption from the second death beyond any other believers; neither do they reign, either literally or symbolically, but are only subjects of Christ's kingdom.

9. The expression, "to have a part in the first resurrection" is an evident contrast with the solemn words in chapter xxi. 9. They are not a contrast to anything

in the account of the great apostasy. But the words in chapter xxi. 9, relate to the final doom of the wicked ; therefore, the words in chapter xx. 6, must relate to the full glory of the righteous in the resurrection.

10. Not to be hurt of the second death is a *distinctive* privilege that marks the subjects of the first resurrection. Now, this is *not* a distinctive privilege of millennial, as compared with other believers, but it *is* a distinction of the righteous dead, as contrasted with all others who have to be raised.

11. The words at the close of the verse refer us to Rev. v. 10. There the saints in heaven express their joyful anticipation.—"Thou hast made us to our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." How strangely diluted will this appear, by the proposed construction—that they are made symbolical representatives of the millennial blessedness, and shall hereafter be used as symbols to express a great revival of religion on the earth ? What do we gain by such constructions, but change the most solid and simple promises into shadows that elude our grasp !

12. The fifth verse, and the verses 7—9, are equally narrative, and occur in the same context. If, then, the event referred to be the same, these contradictions will follow. First, that the same parties may be described as the dead, and as nations living on the earth. Next, the living apostates of one age may be fitly described as all the dead of all ages, except the martyrs and confessors. Next, that a Satanic delusion is fitly termed a living again, and the consummation of spiritual ruin a figurative resurrection. Lastly, that the resurrection of the rest of the dead relates entirely to an event in which the dead are not mentioned, but the living only, and has no reference to that solemn event where the dead, and no others, are four times expressly named by the Holy Spirit.

Surely this is enough to shew the hopeless labyrinth of confusion and error, which results from the second figurative resurrection ; and though Mr. Marsh speaks of acquiescing in the common interpretation, I believe that this hypothesis was never born before the present century. And yet it may possibly struggle hard for life ; since without its help it is scarcely possible to escape the argument for a literal first resurrection. The

explanation of Vitringa, that by "the rest of the dead" is meant "all the dead," though wide as the poles from the one maintained by our author, is scarcely less harsh and violent. Yet, however untenable, it certainly requires less violence, and involves fewer contradictions.

Since writing the above, I have observed with surprise, that Mr. Faber, in the last edition of his Sacred Calendar, advocates the construction here opposed. There are few authors whose name carries a superior weight, or to whose judgment I should personally be more disposed to yield a willing deference. But here the maxim applies, *Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.* It is my full and firm conviction that the arguments just offered are invincible and decisive.

One reason is alleged by him for the identity of the apostasy and resurrection which I should else have never suspected; and I am still surprised that so able a writer could rest on it for one moment. 'The resurrection of the rest of the dead takes place, we are told, at the end of the thousand years. But the end of the thousand years is not the end of the world. Therefore what is called the resurrection of the rest of the dead, occurring at the end of the thousand years, and long before the final consummation of all things, cannot be the *literal* resurrection of the dead, both small and great, which the prophet fixes to the unknown and undefined epoch of the literal day of universal judgment.'

Now, the sole basis of this argument is the single clause—"The rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished." And so far from that phrase fixing the event to the moment when the thousand years expire, it is well known to critics that exactly the same phraseology may be, and is used, when the event spoken of *never occurs at all.* The inference is therefore without the slightest foundation. Let the reader compare only Gen. xlix. 10; xxviii. 15: Isa. vi. 9—12; Matt. i. 25, and he will see that the construction of the learned writer would contradict the facts in every case, and even involve consequences the most revolting and unnatural. And further, there is nothing in the prophecy from which we can certainly gather that the open apostasy lasts beyond even a single year. The materials are all ready when the Tempter is loosed to deceive, and we have no means of deciding how rapid may be the suc-

cess of that awful delusion. The argument, then, on which Mr. Faber chiefly relies, rests on a demonstrable error of critical interpretation, and a conjectural inference that is quite uncertain. There is no writer from whom, on public and private grounds, I regret more sincerely to differ on any point; but to pass over an argument without notice, on which such a stress has been laid, might have seemed like the conscious evasion of a real difficulty; while, in truth, there is none whatever in the words of the prophecy.

III. One argument in favour of the literal resurrection had been drawn from the vision of the fourth seal. The souls under the altar there prayed for recompence; here their prayer is answered. The vision (chap. xx.) does not therefore denote an abstract progress of truth and righteousness, but the personal recompence of the martyrs themselves. Mr. Marsh replies that the prayer of the martyrs contains no allusion to the subject of their own resurrection. Doubtless, if this were true, the answer on this point would be complete. My own impression, and that, I conceive, of most readers, is the opposite. The whole is one earnest appeal to God, as the righteous Governor, to reverse what man has unrighteously done. The martyrs' sufferings are more prominent in the vision than even the triumph of their oppressors. The prayer is two-fold, for judgment (the very word used in chap. xx. of the martyrs' privilege,) and for vengeance. They are commanded to wait until the last martyr shall have suffered, and meanwhile white robes are given them. Surely their own resurrection is as integral a part of their prayer as the vengeance on their persecutors. Compare 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. Psalm vii. 8, 9; ix. 12—18; xvii. 13—15; xxxv. 23, 24; xxxvii. 28; lviii. 11; and this conclusion will, I think, be fully established.

There is only one other remark, directly bearing on this subject, which calls for notice. 'In the former vision,' the author observes, 'the souls of the martyrs are introduced as symbols; for does any one receive it as a literal fact that the souls of the slain confessors were seen lying under an altar, and that white robes were given to them? All this is surely a symbolical action; and the persons who take part in it are sym-

bolical persons. It follows that the same persons must be symbolical in the second vision also.'

The fallacy of this argument has already been exposed in the Lectures, p. 223. When the subordinate features of a prediction are symbolical, it will by no means follow that real persons, described by their own distinctive titles, are symbolical also. In chapter xii., neither Michael is a symbol, nor Satan, but real angelic beings, though the heads and the horns of the dragon are symbolical. Let us take an extreme instance, to expose the fallacy more clearly. In Isaiah lxii., we read thus :—"Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Here the crown, the diadem, and even the hand, are symbolical; but who would venture to make the Divine Being a symbol also?

Again the vision, chap. vi., is based allusively on the sacrifices of the law; where the blood, which is the life, was poured out at the bottom of the altar. As the blood, therefore, under the literal altar, so here, as more expressive to the eye, the *manes* or shades, under the figurative altar, represent the separate or disembodied souls of the righteous. There is not here the shadow of a warrant for transferring the prayer or the promise to any other persons than the slain martyrs, who are expressly named, and whose number is to be filled up by their martyred brethren.

I have now replied, I think, to all those parts of the pamphlet which have most appearance of weight. Of the six arguments I had previously adduced, four are left by the author in their full and unbroken force. The first of those to which he replies, consists of two premises. One of these he admits as proved, and modifies the rival hypothesis accordingly. The other premise has been shewn to rest on the general, and almost unbroken usage of Scripture. Of the two passages brought in disproof, one confirms it, and the other does not really apply. The second argument, drawn from the resurrection of the rest of the dead, is met by two reasons and an hypothesis. The first reason depends on the popular usage, in such phrases as 'a first summer,' and has been shewn to subvert the author's own explanation. The second reason is drawn from the silence concerning the first death and second resurrec-

tion. But for this silence another reason, and much simpler has now been offered. The hypothesis is, that the last apostasy is the second resurrection. This view has now been sifted, and fully disproved, by twelve distinct and decisive arguments. Difficulties, in fact, multiply on every side, and in each separate clause, when we renounce the earliest, the simplest, and only natural interpretation of the prophecy. Receive this, and all becomes simple and harmonious. The only objection is that it destroys a popular notion, which itself obscures the true order and harmony of the divine dispensations.

Regret is expressed, in the opening of the pamphlet, that 'subjects on which learned and pious men differ in judgment,' should be set before a mixed congregation. But such a maxim of conduct, though plausible, is deceptive and dangerous. Its first effect would be to limit all teaching in the Church of Christ to the truths held by the most erroneous or most ignorant among its teachers. The next result would be to debase even this standard lower and lower, and to sink the Church in a downward progression of ignorance and darkness. A far safer rule of action is found in that Divine command,—"He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." Patience and caution are eminently needful in forming our judgment on any part of Divine truth. And often the opposite judgment of pious men may be a weighty reason for strict and cautious re-examination. But still the faithful utterance of deep and slowly matured convictions, even though some error due to human infirmity should cleave to them still, will be more useful to the Church, and more acceptable to God, than a cold and timorous calculation how many or how few truths Christians in general will receive, and a concealment of the rest in a prudent silence. The views of Mr. Marsh were once, in substance, my own. Their abandonment has been the result of a close and long examination of Scripture, with a direct and simple aim to ascertain their real testimony on these doctrines. The effect has been an undoubting conviction that the simplest and most natural exposition of this present passage, (Rev. xx.) is required also to reconcile and harmonize all the other prophecies of the word of God.

May it please Him to endue us all so richly with the spirit of forbearance and of heavenly wisdom, that we may rise beyond the mists and shadows of human opinions, into the pure, clear, and blessed light of His everlasting truth.

One main reason, perhaps, of the prejudice which many Christians still feel against the literal view of the first resurrection, is the isolated form in which the doctrine has often been maintained. Their system has appeared, in a manner, complete without it; and hence they have looked on it as an alien intruder, a discordant note in the full harmony of Divine truth. A juster view would be to regard it as a chord of transition into another key, where the same melody re-appears once more, but reveals itself with an increased compass and richness of Divine harmony. A feeble attempt has been made, in the later chapters of this work, to remove the spell, and to open some glimpses of that wide field of spiritual meditation which the doctrine really discloses to our view. May it please God to bless even this scanty first-fruits. The full harvest of truth in this unexplored field of research still remains to be gathered, and will be found to be rich in fruits of hope, and gladness, and spiritual wisdom, that surpass the noblest efforts of human imagination.

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